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# HISTORY

MAGAZINE

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## Bloody Mary's revolution

How the controversial queen transformed Tudor England

**PLUS**

### Becoming Henry VIII

Was Edward VI the image of his father?

**ACCIDENTAL AMERICANS**

England in the New World

**Ancient Egypt's female pharaohs**

The strange world of Victorian duels

## Kamikaze terror

Why WWII Japanese pilots chose certain death



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1888

The Central News Office in London received a letter signed by 'Jack the Ripper'.



**THE TOP-HAT IN 1797.**  
The *London Gazette* reprints from an old journal, dated January 16th, 1797, the following amusing account of the wearing of the first silk hat in London:—"John Hetherington, haberdasher, of the Strand, was arraigned before the Lord Mayor yesterday on a charge of breach of the peace, and inciting to riot, and was required to give bonds in the sum of £500. It was in evidence that Mr. Hetherington, who is well connected, appeared on the public highway wearing upon his head what he called a silk hat (which was offered in evidence), a tall structure having a shiny lustre, and calculated to frighten timid people. As a matter

1797

A gentleman was arrested for breach of the peace after wearing the first top hat and causing several women to faint.



**THE NOTTINGHAM EVENING**  
FACSIMILES OF "JACK THE RIPPER'S" LETTER AND POST CARD.  
25. Sept. 1888.  
Dear Boss  
I keep on hearing the police have caught me, but they wont fix me just yet. I have laughed when they look so clever and talk about being on the right track. That joke about Leather Apron gave me real

1926

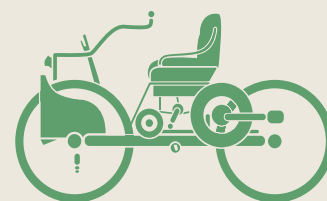
A sheep found buried under 10 tons of coal was rescued and adopted as a mascot by the coal tippers at Swansea Docks.



**THE QUESTION OF HORSELESS CARRIAGES.**  
At the Tunbridge Police-court, Mr. Walter Arnold, the owner of a horseless carriage, was summoned on four informations with reference to using a horseless carriage on the highway. The first was for using a locomotive without a horse from the County Council, the second for having less than three persons in charge of the same, the third for going at a greater rate than two miles an hour, and the fourth for not having his name and address placed on the machine.—The evidence was that the carriage was going at the rate of eight miles an hour.—Mr. Cripps, who defended, contended that the machine was not one contemplated when the Locomotive Acts were passed, and said that the first of those carriages had been used by Sir David

1896

Walter Arnold became the first British person to be fined for speeding in January. He had been travelling at a reckless 8mph.



**SHEEP AS MASCOT**  
**Coal Tippers Adopt an Animal They Saved**  
The sheep which was found buried under ten tons of coal in a railway truck at Swansea Docks has been presented to the coal tippers by the animal's owner.  
This is in recognition and appreciation of the humane manner in which they cared for and treated the exhausted animal.  
When found it had apparently been in the truck six days, covered all the time by the coal.  
The coal tippers have decided to keep the animal as a mascot.  
**WIMBLEDON, said she**  
man was her husband, about three years ago his possession. ce and was not heard The woman thought a handkerchief found said he was not satisfied an open verdict of " No evidence as to death was produced.  
**RY INJURIES**  
est held yesterday on a stockman, who was lead in a paddock at Herts, early on Sunday that he had a  
**NEWPORT-PARIS**  
**Sick Woman's Journey**  
Motor and P  
An aeroplane fitted as figured in a remarkable Newport (Mon.) to Paris terday in the space of minutes.  
The passenger, a sick

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CHRISTMAS 2014

# WELCOME

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MAGAZINE

“A bloody tyrant and a sickly child. That remains a popular view of the two ‘lesser’ Tudors, **Mary I and Edward VI**, whose reigns were sandwiched between their far more illustrious father and sister. This month, historians Anna Whitelock and Stephen Alford will be challenging those perceptions, arguing that ‘bloody’ Mary was a hugely accomplished ruler (page 24) and that the boy-king Edward was set to emulate Henry VIII (page 20). For both Mary and Edward it was chiefly their untimely deaths that left their destinies unfulfilled and their reputations weakened.

Untimely deaths were sadly all-too common in the mid-20th century, as the **Second World War** devastated the globe. Of the tens of millions who lost their lives, few could have been as sure of their fate as the **Japanese kamikaze pilots** whose missions offered no prospect of survival. And yet the men who flew these planes had generally volunteered for the role. On page 40, Christopher Harding seeks to understand why these pilots made that awful choice.

It's not all death and destruction this month, though. In what is a really packed issue, you'll also find articles on **female pharaohs**, **medieval castles** and **settlers in America**. And, as it is our Christmas edition, we have included our regular books and DVDs of the year selections as well as our bumper Christmas quiz and crossword. I hope that the magazine keeps you entertained over the festive period and look forward to sharing lots more historical stories with you in the new year.

**Rob Attar**  
Editor



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## THIS ISSUE'S CONTRIBUTORS



### Francis Pryor

Flag Fen in Peterborough is the only place in the world where you can see Bronze Age timbers in their original location. The site is very special to me, not least because I was the one who discovered it, back in 1982!

● Francis explores the Bronze Age site at Flag Fen on page 78



### Joann Fletcher

With my long-standing interest in the women of ancient Egypt, two recent projects for BBC Two allowed me to focus on some of the individuals themselves – from the housewife Meryt to the female pharaoh Hatshepsut.

● Joann discusses Egypt's female pharaohs on page 47



### Chris Harding

I grew up with the popular image of Japanese soldiers during the Second World War as irredeemably cruel and not quite human. I've found the kamikaze pilot writings a way of getting closer to the more complex reality of what conflict forced a generation of Japan's youth to do and become.

● Chris writes about the kamikaze on page 40

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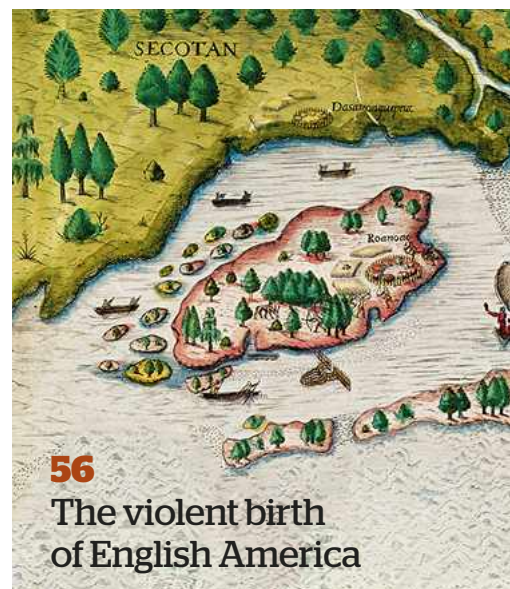
Huw Edwards on David Lloyd George

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The violent birth of English America



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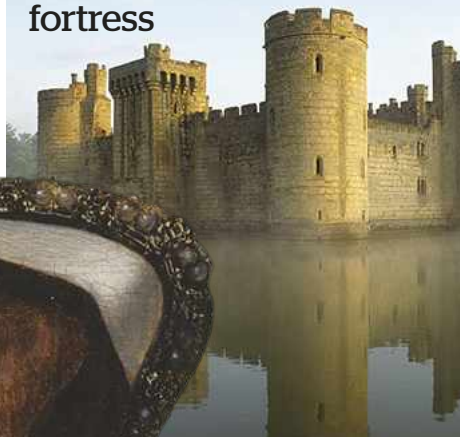
"Even at the age of 15, Edward VI made clear his voice and will"





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**“MARY WAS THE TUDOR TRAILBLAZER, WHOSE REIGN REDEFINED THE ENGLISH MONARCHY”**



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Three millennia of female rulers in ancient Egypt



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What were the best history books of 2014?



# ANNIVERSARIES

**25 December 1066**

## The Conqueror is crowned

*William of Normandy's Westminster Abbey coronation goes up in smoke – in more ways than one*

**O**n the morning of Christmas Day 1066, William of Normandy rode through the streets of Westminster towards his coronation. His destination was the magnificent new abbey begun by his distant cousin, Edward the Confessor. It was just over two months since the battle of Hastings. Across the country, resistance still smouldered and security around the abbey was tight.

William's coronation had been planned as the ultimate propaganda coup. In a supremely symbolic moment, the invader was crowned king by Ealdred, Archbishop of York, previously one of the chief supporters of Harold II, the last Anglo-Saxon king. Before lowering the crown onto William's head, Ealdred asked the crowd – in English – if they wanted him as their king. And as had no doubt been arranged, up went the loud cheers of acclamation.

But then came disaster. In a telling sign of the anxiety of the day, William's

Norman troops misunderstood the cries of the English crowd. According to the chronicler Orderic Vitalis, "the armed guard outside, hearing the tumult of the joyful crowd in the church and the harsh accents of a foreign tongue, imagined that some treachery was afoot, and rashly set fire to some of the buildings".

The fire spread, the crowd panicked, and, Vitalis wrote, "throngs of men and women of every rank and condition rushed out of the church in frantic haste. Only the bishops and a few clergy and monks remained, terrified, in the sanctuary, and with difficulty completed the consecration of the king who was trembling from head to foot."

For William it was the worst possible start; for his new subjects, meanwhile, it was a sign of things to come. The English, recorded Vitalis, "never again trusted the Normans who seemed to have betrayed them, but nursed their anger and bided their time to take revenge".



**Burning ambition:** the carefully planned crowning of William the Conqueror, shown here in a 15th-century illumination, was interrupted by a fire in the abbey

**24 December 1826**

## Eggnog excess fuels riots

*Rebellion at the United States Military Academy results in court martials and hard labour*

**L**ate on the evening of Christmas Eve 1826, a group of cadets held a party at the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York.

Two days earlier, the cadets had smuggled in whiskey with which to make eggnog, and now they were determined to have some fun. By two in the morning they were singing loudly, and at around four they were severely reprimanded by their superior officer, Captain Ethan Hitchcock. But too much drink had flowed for them to take much notice.

Indeed, by roll call on Christmas Day, large groups of cadets, many of them visibly drunk, were in open revolt. Captain Hitchcock tried in vain to read the Riot Act, but to no avail; indeed, at one stage he was besieged in his room by a detachment of cadets, one of them firing a pistol.

Rumours spread that the officers had called for reinforcements, which provoked other cadets to take up arms in defence of their barracks. Only by breakfast time, when the rest of the cadets, who were sober, succeeded in calming their fellows, did the officers manage to restore order.

For the image of West Point, the Eggnog Riot was an utter humiliation. Some 70 men were involved in the rebellion, 20 of whom were court-martialled, while a further miscreant was sentenced to hard labour.

But most of the rebellious cadets soon shrugged off the stigma of the incident. Indeed, one of them later became president of his country. His name was Jefferson Davis – and his country was the Confederate States of America. **H**



Dominic Sandbrook recently presented the series *Tomorrow's Worlds: The Unearthly History of Science Fiction* on BBC Two

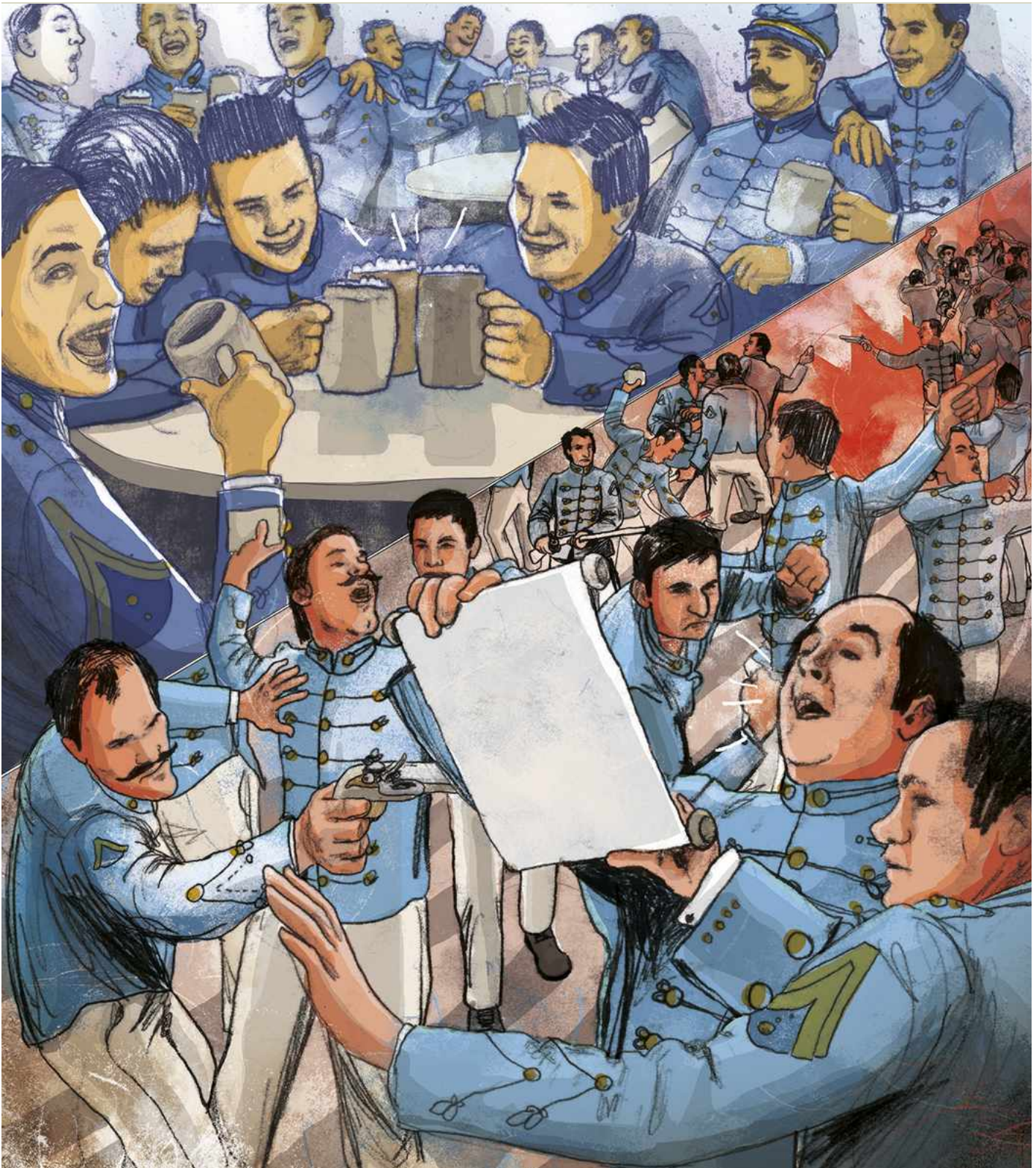


ILLUSTRATION BY LUKE WALLER

What started as a Christmas knees-up ended in open revolt at the US Military Academy at West Point in 1826. Our illustration shows cadets imbibing too much alcohol for their own good before brandishing their pistols and openly defying the reading of the Riot Act



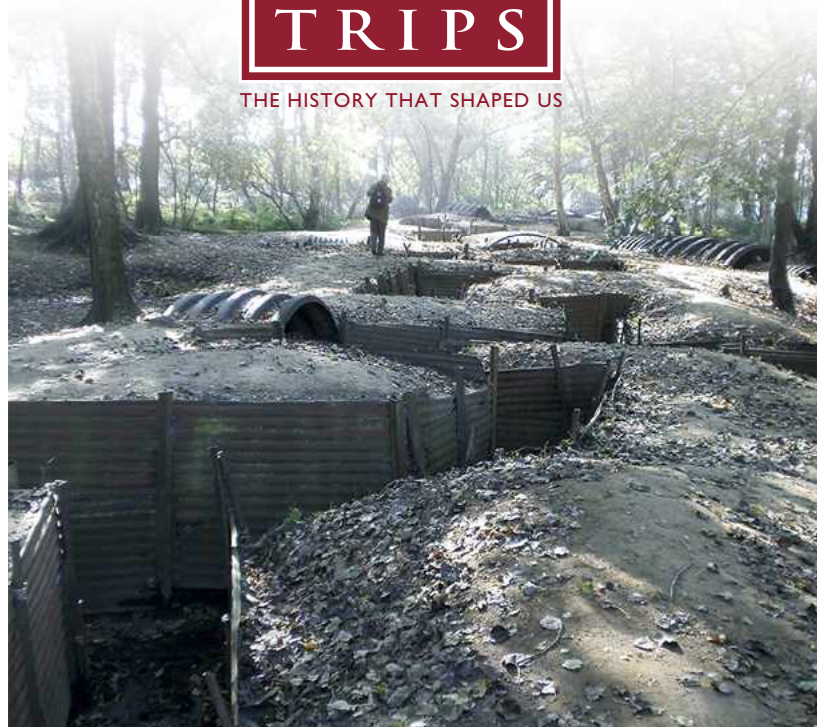
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# HISTORY NOW

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## Behind the wire: the stories of Britain's Great War internees revealed

A new study is exploring an often overlooked episode in the First World War - the incarceration of German civilians in British internment camps. By **Matt Elton**

**T**he experiences of soldiers and British civilians during the First World War have received much attention, particularly during the past 12 months. However, a new research project is exploring a relatively little-known aspect of the conflict: the stories of German civilians interned throughout the British empire.

The study, being carried out by Stefan Manz from Aston University and Panikos Panayi from de Montfort University, is focusing on the estimated 40,000 civilians held in internment camps around Britain as well as in its colonies and dominions. There were at least 16 such facilities in the UK: Knockaloe on the Isle of Man was the largest, but others were located in London, Yorkshire and Scotland. The camps were surrounded by barbed wire and, although there is no evidence of deliberate mistreatment, the reality of camp life was often harsh: internees were removed from their homes and jobs and forced to live in groups



**Christmas in captivity** One of the festive cards created by German internees at the Knockaloe camp on the Isle of Man during the First World War. Civilians were kept behind barbed wire at sites around the British Isles

74%

of visitors to *BBC History Magazine's History Weekend* rated the event 9 out of 10, according to survey results



A sign painted on a London shop to stop it being attacked in anti-German protests, 1915. Such tension led to camps being set up around the UK

of 30 in open-plan timber huts. “Families were separated for long periods, and businesses went bankrupt in the absence of their owners,” Manz told *BBC History Magazine*. “A Swiss camp inspector wrote about what he called ‘barbed wire disease’: a combination of boredom, lack of privacy and a feeling of senselessness, all of which led to depression.”

In order to counter these negative feelings, many internees set up voluntary work, education and recreation groups, often reflecting interests from their civilian lives. In Stobs, the central camp in Scotland, a school taught subjects including science and history; on the Isle of Man, internees made Christmas cards (such as that pictured on page nine).

Among the case studies highlighted by the project is that of Paul Cohen-Portheim, a German-Jewish painter and writer who was visiting friends in Devonshire during the summer of 1914. He became an ‘enemy alien’ following the outbreak of the war and was interned

“Families were torn apart and skilled members of society locked away for no other reason than their nationality”

in May 1915, first in the Knockaloe camp and then in Lofthouse camp in West Yorkshire. He was finally forcibly repatriated to Germany in 1918.

The study is also exploring the factors that led the British government to take such measures. “There is no suggestion that the internment policy was born of viciousness on the part of the British people or government,” says Manz. “But it does demonstrate the power of fear: people were understandably concerned about the idea of spies in their midst, especially with their men fighting at the front. This panic spiralled out of control, leading the British government to make a series of hasty decisions in an attempt to regain a sense of calm.”

Manz points to the sinking of the British passenger liner *Lusitania* by a German submarine on 7 May 1915 as a key source of this growing anxiety. The killing of over 1,000 passengers triggered mass riots against German-owned properties throughout the British empire, and led the government to support calls for mass internment. “These camps were one of the first examples of civilian mass internment and contributed to a ‘normalisation’ of such policy in belligerent nations,” Manz says. “Britain was both willing and able to roll the policy out across the globe via its empire. Families were torn apart, communities wrecked, and skilled members of society locked away for no other reason than their nationality.”

A century on, Manz suggests that the new research is vital to understanding the whole story of the First World War. “Even today, the memory of these events is mainly confined to groups with a specific interest, such as local history societies. Why is there no wider public memorialisation? I would argue that it’s because explanations do not sit nicely with publicly held perceptions of the war and, indeed, British identity.

“This type of research is valuable as it contributes to a broader understanding of ‘remembrance’, from which minorities are usually excluded. The 800,000 civilians held as internees in Europe during the war constitute a critical mass of victims that is consistently overlooked in ‘national’ remembrance cultures.”

## FESTIVAL

## History-lovers gather for Malmesbury event

Hilary Mantel’s thoughts on writing historical fiction and Andrew Roberts’ views on Napoleon were among the highlights from this year’s *BBC History Magazine History Weekend*, which returned to Malmesbury in October.

The event, now in its second year, brought visitors from around the world together for four days of lectures and discussions. This year’s First World War centenary meant that the conflict was a recurring theme, with Dan Snow offering a critical look at modern misconceptions and David Olusoga assessing the impact of fighting around the world.

The addition of new venues and an extra day also allowed for the exploration of a huge range of topics and historical eras. Tom Holland and Harry Sidebottom offered lively takes on the ancient world, while historian and broadcaster Janina Ramirez closed the event with an entertaining look at the Hundred Years’ War through 20 objects.

“This year’s History Weekend was a great success,” said the magazine’s publisher, Dave Musgrove. “Most of the sessions were jam-packed, and the atmosphere in the venues was tremendous. Our historians told me that they particularly enjoyed the quality of audience questions, which is of course what you’d expect from our magazine readers. I’m now working on plans for next year’s event, and we’ll announce details as soon as we have them.”

*BBC History Magazine* will also be running two day-events exploring Magna Carta and Waterloo in Bristol in March 2015. For more details, see page 62 or visit [historyextra.com/events](http://historyextra.com/events). ME



Visitors to *BBC History Magazine's History Weekend* event in October



ARCHAEOLOGY

# Giant Iron Age artworks spotted from space

The discovery of a network of huge monuments dating from 3,000 years ago is causing experts to re-think ancient life on Asia's steppes

**C**reated from huge earthen mounds and stretching across the landscape in geometric patterns, geoglyphs are among the largest works of art ever made by human hands. Now a network of previously unknown geoglyphs has been found in the central Asian Republic of Kazakhstan using satellite technology – and experts believe that it may change our understanding of the Iron Age culture that produced it.

Dating from as far back as approximately 3,000 years ago, the 50 geoglyphs are thought to be the oldest examples of such art in the world. Almost all consist of dozens of large earthen mounds formed into geometric patterns including giant circles, crosses and squares dissected by diagonal lines. The most complex geoglyph is made up of 101 individual mounds, while the most unusual, comprised of linear earthworks rather than mounds, is in the shape of a swastika-type design – a solar symbol in ancient times.

The scale of the artworks is staggering. Each mound measures between 10 and 12m in diameter and may originally have stood at 2 or 3m high. The largest resulting design is a huge cross, 436m across, consisting of 39 individual earthen mounds.

The method by which the sites were found is also remarkable: scholars surveyed vast areas of land using Google Earth, an online virtual globe that allows users to explore high-resolution satellite images of the planet's terrain. Archaeologists from Vilnius University in Lithuania and Kostanay University in Kazakhstan are now joining forces with amateur archaeologists to use the software to systematically search an area of hundreds of thousands of square miles over the coming years. It is thought that dozens, possibly hundreds, of further examples await discovery in other areas of the steppes.

The experts also hope to crack the riddle of who built the geoglyphs and the reasons that they did so. Until now, it was thought that the only major monuments built by the Iron Age nomadic peoples who inhabited the region's vast grass-covered plains were the

**“Until now, we had little indication of how socially organised these prehistoric steppe-land nomads were”**



**Signs of the times** Examples of the geoglyphs discovered in Asia – a swastika-like design and a dissected square. Experts are exploring what the works tell us about the culture that made them

mounds in which they buried their dead. However, the size of the newly discovered geoglyphs suggests both that they had other uses and that their creators were more socially and organisationally advanced than previously thought.

All of the geoglyphs found so far in the current project were built within an area of 70,000 square miles. Archaeologists suspect that their specific locations suggest that the monuments would have had religious, economic and political significance: almost all are situated on high ground between river systems, indicating that they may have repre-

sented the points at which adjacent tribal or clan territories or pasture lands met.

Archaeologist Dr Giedre Motuzaite Matuzeviciute of Vilnius University, one of the leaders of the survey project, told *BBC History Magazine*: “Until now, we had little indication of how socially organised the prehistoric nomads of this steppeland were. Now, for the first time, we are seeing archaeological evidence that suggests they were able to bring together and organise substantial numbers of people to create very large-scale communal monuments.”  
*David Keys*

The historians' view...

# What next for Hong Kong?

Will the massive pro-democracy demonstrations that have paralysed Hong Kong since September trigger moves towards greater political freedom or spark a Chinese crackdown? Two historians offer their verdicts

Interviews by **Chris Bowlby**, a BBC journalist specialising in history

“Hong Kongers see themselves as being part of a growing move towards democracy across the polities of Asia

**RANA MITTER**

Whatever happens we're going into a period in Hong Kong when there'll be a move towards universal suffrage in one way or another, continued freedom in the media and an independent judiciary (though aspects of this have been chipped away). That remains the framework in which the region operates and will operate for some time to come.

For a long period before the late 1990s it seemed that China was on a similar path, just a much slower one. I don't think that view can easily be maintained anymore. It seems to me, and lots of observers, that China is now moving in a very different direction – one in which continued central rule and oversight by the Communist party is not going to be weakened in any meaningful sense, with increasingly strong restrictions on civil society and the media. There is no remotely immediate prospect of a system of wider suffrage being spread through China.

Politics in Hong Kong does have a different culture. It's partly to do with its engagement with the outside world from the 19th century. It's also to do with the legacy of being a British colony for a long period.

The political nature of Hong Kong has always been underestimated. We should remember that in 1925, for example, Hong Kong was heavily involved in one of the biggest labour strikes to ever sweep China – even though it was a British colony. We should also remember there were riots in Hong Kong in the 1960s and the establishment of the Independent Commission Against Corruption in the 1970s, which came in part from grass-roots political moves. The sense of economic freedom has deep roots. So the idea that freedoms and rights have been absent from Hong Kong political discourse is misleading – they've always been there.

There's been a real sea change in the last 30 years or so, because in the period between the signing of the Sino-British Joint Declaration in 1984 (in which plans were laid out to return Hong Kong to China) and today, Hong Kong has started to reorient its political identity not just in terms of China but also in terms of the greater Asian region.

When the declaration was signed, the vast majority of Asia was non-democratic. The system that China was signing Hong Kong up to was broadly within the mainstream of politics within the region – the only real democracies were Japan and India. Nowadays, the vast majority of polities within the region are either genuinely or at least partially democratic – Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Taiwan, South Korea – all of which were much more restrictive in 1984. Many Hong Kongers see themselves as part of that growing wave of change in Asia.



Pro-democracy campaigners on the streets of Hong Kong, 28 October 2014. “We're going into a period when there'll be a move towards universal suffrage,” says Rana Mitter

Their points of comparison are, I suspect, much more with Seoul or Taipei or other developed commercial cities in the region. And the comparison with Chinese cities like Beijing or Shanghai makes much less sense.

In opinion polls, a large number of people in Hong Kong, when asked their identity, would consider themselves to be ‘Hong Kong Chinese’. Now this is Chinese – there's no question about that. But it's a specific definition of what being Chinese means. Hong Kong to this day, 17 years after the handover, is still demonstrably very different from the mainland.



**Rana Mitter** is professor of the history and politics of modern China, University of Oxford and author of *China's War with Japan, 1937–1945* (Penguin)





A Red Guard member, masked against flu germs, spreads the word of Mao, 1967

people have been caricatured as being interested only in enriching themselves and consuming avidly in the scores of shopping malls that infest the city. But income inequality is rising fast, and the earnings of many families fall below the official poverty line. There is much to protest about.

There is, however, a long tradition of street protest throughout Hong Kong's history – including under British colonial rule. There were riots in 1967, though that movement was very different from what's taking place now. It was an offshoot of developments in mainland China – the local Communist party and Red Guards trying to make sure they 'did their bit' for the Cultural Revolution [when Chinese leader Mao Zedong promoted the 'true' communist ideology across the country]. It began as a protest over conditions at a plastic-flower factory and was sustained by the insecure socio-economic position of many residents of Hong Kong.

But, on the whole, Hong Kong people sided with the colonial government in their response. They knew about the bodies floating down the river from Canton, which had come from killings being carried out in the Cultural Revolution. Many were either refugees themselves from China or the children of refugees. And the interesting thing is how students and a whole other range of Chinese groups formally and publicly pledged their allegiance to the status quo. It was better than the alternative. But there is a link between then and now because they were expressing, too, their support for an alternative to a leftist China.

Since Hong Kong was handed back to

Chinese rule in 1997 there have been other forms of protest, often with heritage taking a key role. And that has been about Hong Kong's specific identity – it's not just another Chinese city.

But what of the Chinese government's response? The coming to power of Xi Jinping in Beijing does mark a significant shift towards a more hard-line rule. There's been no compromise with those carving out what seemed to be acceptable public spaces for some debate on civil society issues.

One of Xi Jinping's first actions as premier was to go to the National Museum of China in which there is this permanent display called 'the road to rejuvenation'. You go through 100 years of national humiliation and then you emerge into the brightly lit post-1949 world of the rule of the Chinese Communist party, skating very quickly over some of the dark episodes in that history. And we have documents from the leadership saying: we are in the midst of an ideological war with western ideas, and we must strike hard wherever we find them. So if I was in Hong Kong today, I would be worried. **H**



**Robert Bickers** is professor of history at Bristol University. His books include *The Scramble for China: Foreign Devils in the Qing Empire 1832-1914* (Penguin, 2012)

#### DISCOVER MORE

##### BOOK

► **A Modern History of Hong Kong** by Steve Tsang (IB Tauris, 2007)

“China's leadership is saying, we are in an ideological war with the west. If I was in Hong Kong today, I would be worried” **ROBERT BICKERS**

What events tell us is what we should have known already, which is that Hong Kong has always been on a different trajectory. It's had a different education system, it's been more porous, its young have been able to travel, it is an uncensored environment.

What is surprising is that young Hong Kong people are agitating for democracy in this particular way. Democrats have long been viewed as a minority, and Hong Kong

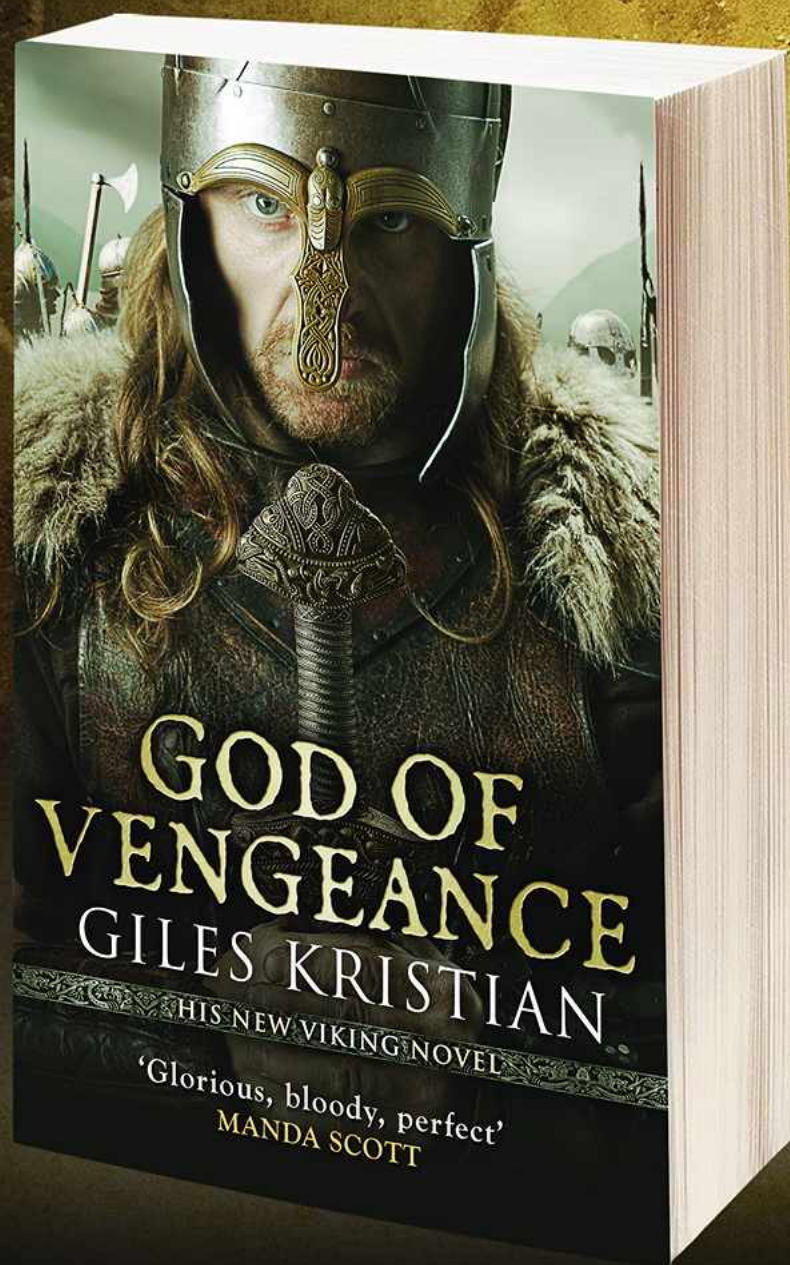


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## PAST NOTES

### TURKEYS

## OLD NEWS

### *The world's happiest wife hides a murderous secret*

**Western Daily Press and  
Bristol Mirror /  
2 March 1948**

**A**fter the Second World War, the newspaper column 'Origins' sought to explain the reason for common words and phrases, and in 1948 they tried to discover the root of 'a skeleton in the closet'. Their investigations uncovered a local legend which recorded that many centuries earlier there had been a quest to find the one person in the world who was completely happy. After much searching they finally found a lady who fitted the bill. She lived a happy and carefree life, with a wonderful husband, and the inspectors decided their mission had been a success.

However, as they were turning to leave, the lady beckoned them to follow her upstairs, where she stopped in front of a small cupboard. It slowly opened and the horrified inspectors found themselves face to face with a human skeleton.

"I try," the lady said, "to keep my troubles to myself, but every night my husband makes me kiss that skeleton!" She explained that they were the bones of the man who had been her husband's rival in her affections, and who he had killed in a duel shortly before they were married. And so the origin of 'a skeleton in the cupboard' was born!

News story sourced from [britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk) and rediscovered by **Fern Riddell**. Fern regularly appears on Radio 3's *Night Waves*.

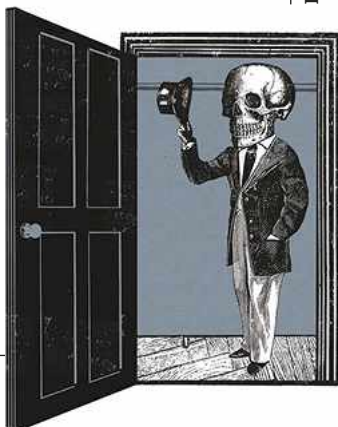


ILLUSTRATION BY BEN JONES



**Land Girls on an Essex farm round up turkeys for the last time, 23 December 1944. These are bound for a London market**

As 10 million homes across Britain prepare to tuck into one, **Julian Humphrys** looks at the history of the bird that will never vote for Christmas.

#### **So, do they come from Turkey?**

No. They're native to the Americas. They got the name because when Europeans first came across them they incorrectly thought they were a form of African guinea fowl which, because they were imported into Europe from Turkey, were commonly known as turkey fowl.

#### **How did turkeys come to Britain?**

Britain probably obtained its first turkeys from the Spanish, who had brought the birds back to Europe after encountering them in the Aztec empire. However it's possible that they were introduced by William Strickland, a Yorkshire merchant and MP who travelled to the New World in the 16th century. He certainly seems to have wanted to promote a link with the bird, as the family coat of arms, which was granted in about 1550, has a turkey as a crest.

#### **When did we start eating them?**

Henry VIII is the first known English king to have eaten turkey. At that time the bird was seen as something of an exotic delicacy and would have been just one of a variety of fowl to be placed before the hungry monarch. One of the reasons for

turkey's appeal was that it was not only large enough to make a fine display on the table but also had tastier and less stringy flesh than that other exotic royal favourite, the peacock.

For centuries the turkey was the preserve of the well-to-do and middle classes and it was only after the Second World War, when it became cheaper to rear, that the turkey became the population's Christmas bird of choice.

#### **What was eaten before turkey?**

If a working-class family in the 19th century ate a bird, it was more likely to have been a goose, and Christmas 'goose clubs' were established to help them save up for it. Note how the poverty-stricken Bob Cratchit in Dickens's *Christmas Carol* scrapes enough money together to buy a goose before the reformed Scrooge presents his family with a massive turkey.

Geese and turkeys were, and still are, extensively reared in East Anglia. In the 18th century, thousands were walked to London in large flocks along what is now the A12 with their feet dipped in tar to protect them. **H**



# LETTERS

## The joys of National Service

LETTER  
OF THE  
MONTH

I refer to the review in November's issue of Professor Vinen's new book, *National Service: Conscription in Britain, 1945–1963*. I did my National Service in the army from 1945–48.

Conscripts were certainly needed at the time, given Britain's military commitments, and the fact that most war veterans were returning to civilian life. I never imagined that National Service was intended or expected to do me any good – it certainly did me no harm. On the contrary, it was the best thing that happened to me at 18 years old.

During my years in the army I cannot remember basic training (which lasted at least six weeks, not two) being “such a misery”. In fact it was rather interesting. Secondly, the use of the bayonet can hardly be taught to recruits with kind words and gentle gestures. As for the

soldier who refuses to wash, regardless of the discomfort he causes others in the barrack room, I would fully support those who take the matter into their own hands, without necessarily causing the pain and humiliation alleged by Professor Vinen.

As for class, well there is that in the army as well as in civilian life, but why single out the Brigade of Guards? It may very well be for public school types but it was not the norm for the army in general.

**William McAteer**, Seychelles

● This issue we're rewarding the writer of the letter of the month with one of our **Books of the year**: *The Hollow Crown* by Dan Jones. For more on the book, turn to page 71



## Blame Shakespeare!

I found Juliet Barker's article (*Did Richard II Side with the Peasants?*, November) most refreshing, and it leads on to another line of thought that your readers might find interesting.

Of the three king Richards, two are generally considered as tyrants and one a hero. This idea is largely promoted by mythology and cultural writings, such as Shakespeare's plays.

And yet Richard I, whose heroic status is largely encouraged thanks to the Robin Hood legend, was perhaps the most disinterested and least regal of the English kings. Meanwhile, historical opinion now seems to be questioning the tyrannical behaviour of Richard II and Richard III – figures who have received a bad representation in the literary world.

I can't help but think, in the light of this more sympathetic view towards the latter Richards, that great writers such as Shakespeare have a lot to answer for!

**Nick Tingley**, East Sussex

## A Ricardian ruse?

Juliet Barker makes a case for the young king Richard II supporting the rebels of 1381 that I feel misunderstands the

nature of the crisis and the role of kingship in later medieval England.

The main focus of the rebels' anger was not the king, but the established political and socio-economic authorities in the localities and at Westminster. The rebels claimed to be acting on Richard's behalf as his loyal commons against advisers who had corrupted the realm by their ill counsel. And so, with government in collapse, Richard remained the one figure who could restore order.

This required Richard to offer concessions the government had no intention of keeping. But how to revoke these without exposing the king as a perjurer? The answer was to distance the king's person from subsequent actions of the crown by referring the matter to parliament for decision. When the concessions were then withdrawn it would appear the king was

**Did Richard II really have the rebels' best interests at heart?**



acting not in a personal capacity, as at Mile End, but in the impersonal corporate identity of the crown and upon the counsel of his lords and commons in parliament.

The reason for the delay in acting was that the government needed to be sure there was sufficient restoration of order for the crown's decisions to be imposed in the provinces without provoking further revolt.

**David K Warner**, Havant

**Juliet Barker replies:** I agree that referring the question of the Mile End concessions to parliament was an attempt to extricate the king from the problem of his having perjured himself by revoking them. The point, however, is that Richard did not simply ask for confirmation, or even just approval, of the revocation: he specifically – and unnecessarily – offered once again to abolish villeinage if the Lords and Commons requested him to do so. The parliament rolls record that this caused such consternation and confusion that the Speaker asked for the charge to be repeated “so that we may well understand it”. Parliament's emphatic rejection of the king's offer reinforced the crown's position but it was expressed in terms that were hardly flattering to the young king himself.

## It's an insult to Napoleon

I very much agree with Andrew Roberts' assessment of Napoleon (*Why Napoleon Merits the Title 'The Great'*, November). He was unquestionably one of the greatest military leaders in history and he brought order out of the chaos that followed the Revolutionary Wars.

The fact that Napoleon tried to make peace with Britain but was rebuffed says as much about the determination of the old order to crush egalitarian ideals as it does about his own ambitions. To think of him as in any way comparable to Hitler is an insult to the great Frenchman, whose personal relationships showed him to be essentially a decent man, unlike the German dictator.

The Napoleonic Wars were part of the wider historical tragedy, which saw so many centuries of conflict between

BRIDGEMAN





Reader Colin Bullen argues that Napoleon – shown here *On the Battlefield of Eylau, 9th February 1807* – was an essentially decent human being

the two essentially similar nations of Britain and France, and which only ended when we came together to defeat the truly evil regimes of the 20th century.  
**Colin Bullen, Kent**

### British heroics at the Bulge

I found Peter Caddick-Adams' version of the battle of the Bulge (*Hitler's Final Gamble*, November) of great interest. He gives the impression that the British only arrived on New Year's Day 1945, helping to seal the breach by mid-January.

However, some British units moved quickly to the area, and I quote from the Royal Artillery commemorative book for the Second World War: "The Ardennes offensive burst upon us and Christmas Eve found HQ 4 AGRA and two of its regiments (of medium guns) in action under command of 29 Armoured Brigade who with no infantry were covering the crossings of the Meuse from Namur to Givet, a distance of 40 miles – against an enemy advancing through thick fog in formidable strength. The group enjoyed a lively Boxing Day, inflicting heavy casualties on the German advance guard."

As for German soldiers in GI uniforms 'infiltrating', it is true that we were told verbally: "If in doubt, shoot first and ask questions later." But we didn't see any!  
**GA Lines, ex Royal Signals, HQ 4 AGRA Surrey**

**Peter Caddick-Adams replies:** Perhaps I should have emphasised the impressive move of Brigadier Roscoe Harvey's 29

Armoured Brigade. They deployed to the Ardennes from Brussels within 36 hours of receiving orders to move, on 19 December. They were first tested on the night of 23 December when a jeep containing three Germans dressed as Americans was intercepted at Dinant and its crew killed.

The drama continued into Christmas Eve, when the vanguard of 2nd Panzer Division crept into Dinant. British Sherman crews were so exhausted that they slept through the arrival of their foes. Awoken by the clattering of tank tracks, the first Sherman opened fire, missed the leading Panzer IV, but hit an ammunition truck. This ignited a fuel tanker. Within minutes, the British – now fully awake – had destroyed two Panthers and two Panzer IVs, stopping 2nd Panzer in their tracks, almost on the Meuse. The British reaction ensured the panzers would get no further.

### Corrections

● On page 73 of our December issue the Iron Age fort pictured should have been captioned Henllys not Henylls

### WRITE TO US

We welcome your letters, while reserving the right to edit them. We may publish your letters on our website. Please include a daytime phone number and, if emailing, a postal address (not for publication). Letters should be no longer than 250 words.

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**Post:** Letters, BBC History Magazine, Immediate Media Company Bristol Ltd, Tower House, Fairfax Street, Bristol BS1 3BN

## SOCIAL MEDIA

What you've been saying on Twitter and Facebook



**@HistoryExtra:** "Every country had a responsibility for not stopping #WW1 but Germany + Austria-Hungary lit the match that set it off," says expert Jay Winter. What do you think?

**@ProfGSheffield** Don't agree with 1st bit - GB tried v hard to prevent war. Agree w/2nd but I go much further in blaming GE & AH aggression

**@kevan\_webb** Yes. I think this is true, regardless of the reply Serbia gave. Germany wanted war to enhance their standing in the world

**@lindaheap** They wouldn't have been able to light the match if other countries hadn't allowed them to

**@HistoryExtra:** Catherine Howard's family home is to be turned into luxury flats. What is your reaction?

**@Neilovich** This makes me sad. Capitalism eating up our heritage again. What will we have left to share with our children?

**@Bakingwonders** What a shame. Such a beautiful building. A hotel may be a better idea. Would be a stunning wedding venue

**@BurtEDitch** Better than knocking it down. I'd prefer a restoration though

**@wendy\_uk** Sad to lose so many original features but far better than the whole building being left to decay

**@HistoryExtra:** If you were able to send a personal message to a soldier, a man who served and was killed during #WW1, what would you write?

**Alison Knight** There are not enough words to say "thank you" for what you did for us. You were loved. You are loved still. You will not be forgotten

**@TeoCanales** Sorry from our hearts, the march of folly to WW1 is a sin of history we should never repeat

**Anthony McPherson** I wouldn't tell him of what became of the world after his sacrifices. It would show him that his effort and suffering had been all in vain. He should be allowed to rest in peace thinking that he made a difference for good



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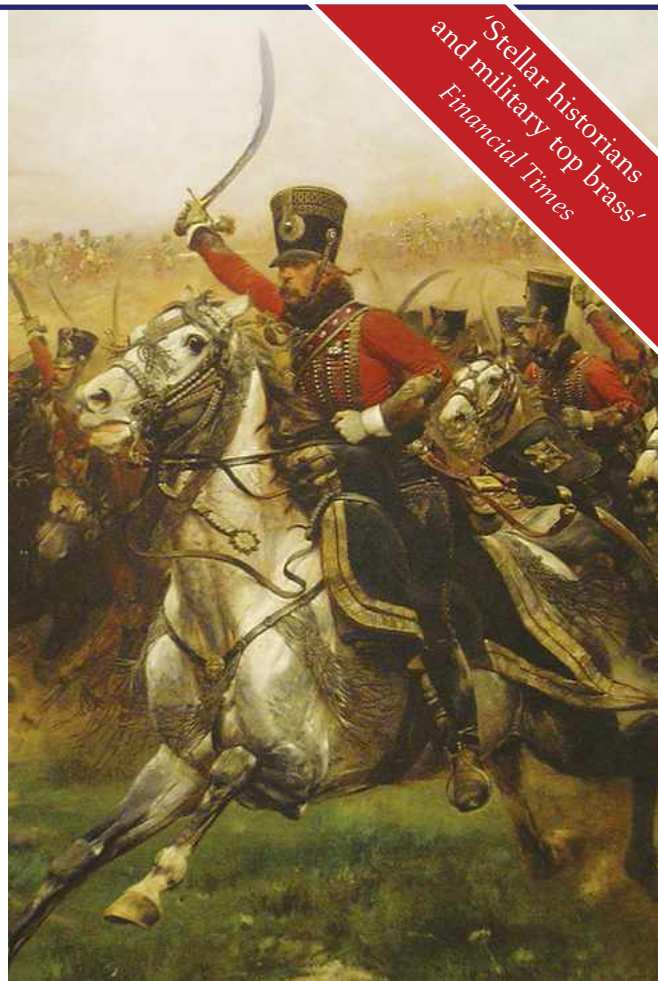
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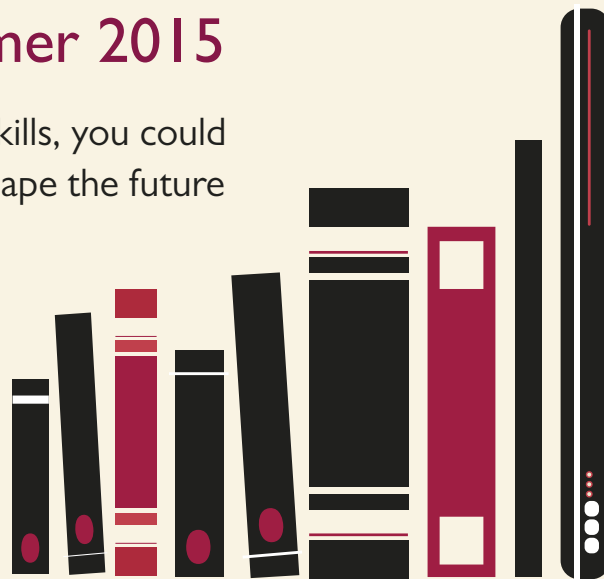


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Michael Wood on... **The Axis Age**

## “Great thinkers appeared all over. And not the odd single genius”

**“**I’m writing this in Qufu where we are shooting *The Story of China*. It is a charming low-rise country town with its medieval walls, gates and streets bustling with cycle rickshaws and horse-drawn carriages. The place owes its fame to Confucius, who was born here in the mid-sixth century BC. Though execrated by the communists, the Master is now thoroughly rehabilitated. President Xi Jinping cited him recently in his keynote address to the Party, his statue stands at the entrance to my hotel, and copies of his *Analects* can be found in my room, like *Gideons Bible*. (This comparison is not far-fetched: it has been said that a larger number of people over a longer period of time have been influenced by this little book than any other in history.)

Early this morning, I visited Confucius’s tomb in its wonderfully atmospheric walled cemetery. There I found a group of Korean traditional scholars in full ceremonial robes and black hats lighting incense and prostrating themselves. “He is still important to all of east Asia,” one said, looking the very image of the man himself, “not just China, but Korea, Japan, Singapore and Malaysia. He defined our collective values of hard work, duty and benevolence. In this age of individualism, his message is still true after 2,500 years – for all the world!”

That got me thinking again about the Axis Age. It was described by German philosopher Karl Jaspers in his book *The Origin and Goal of History*. Jaspers noticed that the early Greek philosophers, Socrates, the Old Testament prophets, the Buddha and Mahavira, Confucius and Lao Tzu lived close in time. He suggested that humanity went through a kind of enlightenment at this time. These days, this idea is not taken terribly seriously by historians. Jaspers spread his net rather wide – between 800 BC and 200 BC – and, in such a span, it would not be hard to find developments that look similar. Six hundred years is a long time in history – from the Hundred Years’ War to us.

But it still seems to me an intriguing idea: that, in the mid-first millennium BC across Eurasia, something is detectable, a way of thinking about the world, which

looks different from anything that had gone before. And remarkably, the key figures all lived within a handful of generations between the 550s and the fourth century BC. Some, like Confucius, the Buddha and some of the great pre-Socratics, may even have been alive at the same time.

They lived in a period of history when the great Bronze Age civilisations had gone. In their place were competing city states – in archaic Greece, the Ganges valley and Warring States-era China. All had merchants and trade, while writing had reached a wider population than just the palace scribes and ritualists. Then, in all of them, great thinkers appear. And not the odd single genius. Think of the philosophers and scientists in Ionia: Heraclitus, Pythagoras, Anaxagoras and the rest. The Buddha’s contemporaries included Jains, Ajivikas, sceptics, rationalists and atomists, all of whom were questioning the nature of the mind and the physical universe. In China, this period is known as the Age of Philosophers, with Daoists, Mohists and Confucius’s followers like Mencius, among whom there were many different views about humanity and the cosmos.

Is there a connection? Well, not literal. No one thinks this is diffusion. But it seems to me that what it looks like is this: the common ideas, even common ways of reasoning, suggest that these widely separated Iron Age cultures had reached a similar point of development. These were increasingly diversified societies with towns and widening uses of literacy. People had also started to question humanity’s progress since the first large-scale societies. The old theocratic structures of thought and power of the Bronze Age were no longer enough. Though all these thinkers were concerned with the spiritual life, none of them (except in Iron Age Israel) put God at the centre. All thought humankind could use reason to understand its place in the world.

How exactly such fascinating cultural change begins, of course, historians cannot say, but it looks like a crucial stage in the history of humanity. As the Korean scholars told me at the sage’s tomb, it is one that still speaks to us today. **II**

.....  
**Michael Wood** is professor of public history at the University of Manchester. His most recent TV series was *King Alfred and the Anglo-Saxons*

**BBC**

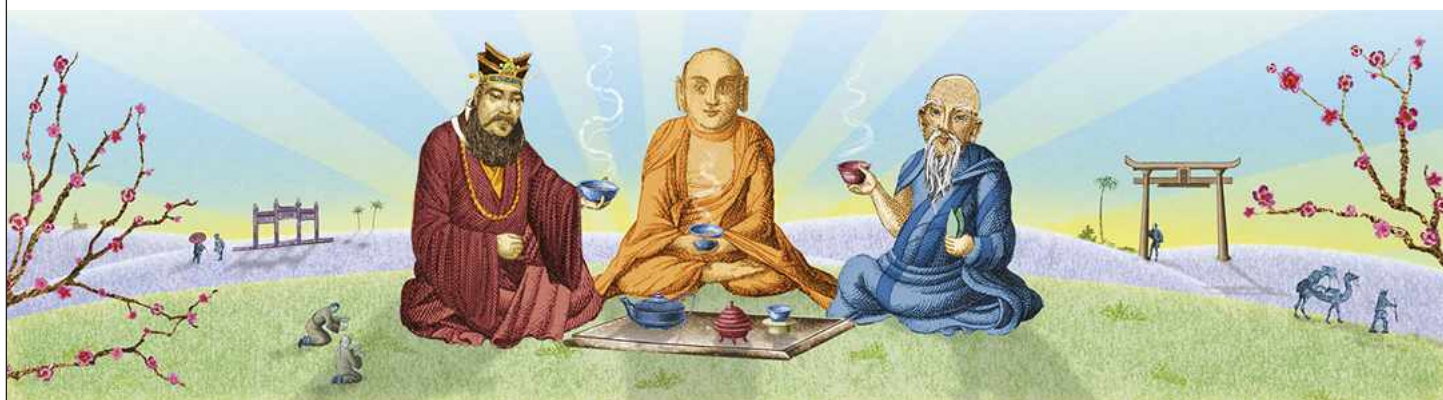


ILLUSTRATION BY FEMKE DE JONG



# Who was the real Edward VI?

The Tudor boy king is often painted as a sickly puppet. But as **Stephen Alford** – author of a new biography – reveals, he may actually have been much like his father

**T**he words are spare and factual: “The Duke of Somerset had his head cut off upon Tower Hill between eight and nine o’clock in the morning.” Blunt, uncompromising, these are not the words of masterful Henry VIII but were written by Henry’s 14-year-old son and heir, Edward VI, in 1552.

Somerset was Edward’s uncle. The boy had known him all his life; for a time the duke was the boy king’s protector, governor and mentor. There was a connection of blood between them – yet there is not one speck of emotion in Edward’s words. He might have been recording the execution of a perfect stranger.

Edward’s reign was short. He was nine years old when he became king, on the death of his father in 1547; he died in 1553, a few months short of his 16th birthday, leaving England with a tangled and contested royal succession and a controversial Protestant church.

Though one of the most elusive kings in the history of England, Edward has been saddled with all kinds of reputations. Probably the most familiar (for which there is no evidence) is that he was weak and sickly, never likely to survive to manhood. Another is that he was a puppet, manipulated by powerful men. A third is that he was a precocious and brilliant intellectual. Less common today is the view that he was Protestant England’s hero in its fight against the pope and the Catholic church.

Here we have half-truths and fantasies. So who was the real Edward? Can we get close to understanding his life and world without falling for an over-simplified stereotype or a piece of religious propaganda? What evidence do we have? And what is the point of bothering? Overshadowed by his predecessor

and successors – the magnificent bulk of Henry VIII, apparently brutal ‘Bloody Mary’ and extraordinary Elizabeth – England’s last boy king perhaps looks, on first inspection, pretty insubstantial.

But Edward was England’s great unfinished king. He was an experiment in Protestant monarchy, the model against which his sister Elizabeth was later judged – and found wanting. He died a work still in progress. What evidence we have points to a king whose ability, vision and ambition would, with time, have matched those of his father.

## Born to rule

All but one of the Tudors were accidental monarchs. Henry VII, Edward’s grandfather, was a usurper, while three inherited the throne only because a sibling died. Edward was the single exception. He was born to rule: that his status was unimpeachable explains a lot about the young king and those who served him. Perhaps Henry VIII remembered how, as a boy, he’d been carefully protected after the death of his elder brother, Arthur, in 1502. He knew what it was like to have a heavy weight of expectation resting upon young shoulders.

When Henry’s third consort, Jane Seymour, gave birth to Edward in 1537, Henry’s strenuous and revolutionary efforts to secure a male royal succession were over at long last. Without the slightest compunction he put aside Princess Mary (born in 1516) and Princess Elizabeth (1533). Both were declared illegitimate by parliament and cut out of the succession, the latter situation reversed only in the final years of Henry’s life.

From 1537 till his death, Henry threw his all into preparing for the throne the prince he called his and England’s “precious jewel”. Like any infant prince, Edward lived apart from his father and family. He had his own household, which moved between palaces and royal houses such as Hunsdon, Hatfield and Tittenhanger. Sometimes he spent time with his sisters, sometimes with Henry and his then queen, Katherine Parr. By the age of seven he was practising Latin grammar and composition by writing to all of his family, as well as to his godfather, Thomas Cranmer, archbishop of Canterbury, who was a hugely important influence throughout his life.

From a very early age, Edward felt the weight of duty. Portraits of the prince – from Hans Holbein the Younger’s infant Edward, produced in 1538, to a full-length painting of 1546 – proclaimed him as his father’s son and heir. The latter, echoing Holbein’s famous (now lost) depiction of Henry VIII, shows Prince Edward, at eight or nine years old, facing the viewer as king-in-waiting. As Edward wrote to Katherine Parr: “I pray God I may be able in part to satisfy the good expectation of the king’s majesty, my father, and of your grace.”

Henry had been taught grammar, poetry, rhetoric, ethics and history, and believed absolutely in his own intellectual abilities. In his boyhood he had met the greatest scholar



The coin with a value of 12 pence first became known as a shilling during Edward’s reign



“Edward was  
**England’s great  
unfinished king** –  
an experiment in  
Protestant monarchy”

This portrait, probably  
produced by an artist in  
the workshop of court  
painter Hans Holbein,  
shows Edward – then  
Duke of Cornwall –  
aged about six in 1543



## Like father, like son

Edward mirrored Henry in interests, bearing and beliefs – even portraits emphasised the similarities

### Chivalry and war

Both Henry and Edward were keenly interested in military history and campaigns, battles and exercises of chivalry. Henry took part in jousts and tournaments wearing splendid suits of armour, and some of the best passages of Edward's 'Chronicle' feature his observations on mock battles and displays of courage. Like Henry, Edward went out with the noble companions of his privy chamber to hunt and hawk. By the age of 14 he was, like his father before him, highly proficient with the English longbow.

### Music and entertainment

Henry was an accomplished musician and a great collector of instruments including lutes and virginals. In 1546 he charged Philip van Wilder, one of his musicians, with improving Edward's lute playing. Music was as important at Edward's court as it had been at Henry's, and during his reign van Wilder went on to direct the singing children of the privy chamber. By 1552, some 42 musicians, two singers, six singing children and nine minstrels were on the king's payroll, and Edward and his young companions played in masques and entertainments.

### Faith

After Henry's death in 1547, Edward, though just a boy, exercised his late father's authority as supreme head of the churches of England and Ireland. Henry had felt able to determine

matters of theology, and Edward was just as assiduous in his duties, listening to sermons preached before him at court. In his teenage years he confronted his much older sister, Mary, challenging her refusal to accept a Protestant settlement of religion and expecting her to submit to his authority as king.

### Command

Henry VIII was an authoritative and magisterial king. By the time of Edward's death in 1553, the young king was beginning to speak as uncompromisingly as his father had done. Both Henry and Edward had close friends and companions at court, but each was keenly aware of his power. Letters to Edward's friends bristle with kingly bossiness; he advised one, Barnaby Fitzpatrick, on how to behave at the French court: "This I write... but to spur you on."

### Portraiture

Pictures of Edward were very consciously imitations of Holbein's Henry VIII – massive and imperial. Henry was aware of his physical presence; as king, he made full use of his size and physique, dominating his subjects. Edward, as a boy and a teenager, looked less formidable than his father, but nevertheless his portraits proclaimed his future potential. A Latin inscription painted on to Holbein's portrait of Edward as a toddler carries an important text: "Little one, emulate your father and be the heir of his virtue."

The stance of nine-year-old Edward, probably painted by Guillaume Scrots in 1546, mirrors the famous portrait of Henry VIII by Hans Holbein, of which this is a copy (the original burned in 1698)



of the age, Erasmus of Rotterdam, and Henry and Katherine made sure that his heir and successor had the best kind of Erasmian education: the learning of a philosopher prince and an enlightened ruler.

Edward was taught by two Cambridge scholars, Richard Cox and John Cheke, who gave him a formidable grounding in Latin and Greek grammar. He read the books of ancient Greek and Roman orators and writers. He was trained in rhetoric (the art in public speaking of testing and presenting an argument and entertaining and persuading an audience), mathematics, French and theology. Like the young Prince Henry, Edward spoke French and Italian, and probably read some Spanish. Father and son shared a passion for astronomy.

Henry VIII found writing tedious and painful (making an important exception composing his love letters to Anne Boleyn). Perhaps Edward disliked writing, too: certainly, his handwriting was never as elegant or easy as his sister Princess Elizabeth's. Still, he had no choice but to write.

Translated from their original Latin, Edward's letters can sound formal, remote, moralistic, pompous and priggish. But this is hardly a surprise. They were really exercises in formal composition, in which virtue – a word that appears over and over again – was deeply embedded.

### Chronicle of youth

Probably a much fairer guide to Edward's mind and interests is his 'Chronicle'. He began writing it in English soon after he became king, but took it up with greater energy in 1551, when he was 13, perhaps under the supervision of John Cheke. The 'Chronicle' is a magpie jumble of facts and events in Edward's life and in the activity of his royal court and government – an organisational hotchpotch. Here, with all of its boyish untidiness and disorder, we get as close as we can to the real Edward.

The 'Chronicle' was not a kind of confessional. That bloodless entry recounting the execution of the Duke of Somerset reads as callous and cold-hearted, but as a king Edward was expected, even in private, to hide feelings and emotions behind a mask of royalty.

The political world of Tudor England in the 1540s and 1550s was not an easy one to navigate – not for Edward, nor for the men who governed in his name. When Henry VIII died leaving a nine-year-old heir, it was perfectly obvious that Edward could not rule for himself. But two things made his royal minority particularly controversial. The first was the successful effort of the elder of Edward's





#### The Protestant champion

This c1570 allegorical painting shows Edward VI as Henry VIII's heir and successor – and as a king presiding over the Protestant Reformation. The pope is thrown down by the Word of God and Catholic 'idolatry' is smashed. Standing to Edward's left is the Duke of Somerset. Seated next to Somerset is the king's other uncle, Thomas Seymour, and his godfather, Archbishop Cranmer.

## “What happened on Edward's death is one of the most dramatic stories of English history”

two maternal uncles to appropriate kingly power. This was Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford and Duke of Somerset. He was Henry VIII's brother-in-law – and the man whose execution in 1552 was so unsentimentally described by Edward. The second was the startling speed and intensity of the full-scale Protestant Reformation that swept away Catholic worship in Edward's kingdom, done in the king's name but really the vision of Archbishop Cranmer of Canterbury.

It is easy to see Edward as the pawn of powerful men. Early in his reign, certainly, he was manipulated by Thomas Seymour (his other uncle) in the latter's tussle for power with the Duke of Somerset. In a printed pamphlet directed at rebels involved in uprisings in 1549, Edward wrote: “Rule we will, because God hath willed: it is as great a fault in us, not to rule, as in a subject not to obey.” This was a case of simple ventriloquism: Edward's words were scripted for him. When Somerset's authority collapsed later that same year, the duke seized the king and used him to try to face down his opponents in the king's council.

But no one doubted that Edward would one day be a king, full and complete in his powers. And all the time he was growing up. By the time he was 14, the young king had moved a step closer to meaningful rule. He was briefed by his advisers, and he wrote papers on subjects that interested him, such as military campaigns and the reform of the currency.

It would be going much too far to say that Edward was now in charge, but the balance of his court and government was shifting. A 14-year-old king, after all, is quite a different

proposition from a nine-year-old prince.

What Edward certainly possessed by 1551 was a powerful sense of self. When his lord chancellor refused to accept a document signed by the king because it had not been countersigned by his advisers, Edward's reaction was forceful and sharp. “It should be a great impediment for me to send to all my council,” he wrote, “and I should seem to be in bondage.” At 14, those words had something still of fantasy about them: four years later they would have been uncompromisingly final. There is an echo here of the magisterial Henry.

Like his father, Edward VI believed in the powers of a king to dispose of the crown in the way he felt was necessary. In the spring months of 1553, when Edward was dying – from a rapid and fatal disease of the lungs – he wrote a ‘Devise’ for the royal succession. This ‘Devise’ is the most perplexing document of Edward's reign: it seems like a last, confusing trick played on historians by the elusive young king.

When Henry VIII died he had left a clear mechanism for the succession: if Edward died without a legitimate heir, his elder sister, Mary, would inherit the throne. If Mary died without a legitimate heir, Elizabeth would be

queen. Even in death, Henry controlled the Tudor line. But his son refused to be outdone.

Edward insisted with some force that the entire political and judicial establishment should sign up to the ‘Devise’, ignoring the lawful claims first of Mary and then of Elizabeth (both of whom were, in Edward's eyes, illegitimate – and one of them, Mary, a Catholic and, thus, offensive). Instead, his proposals would place on the throne his blood kinswoman Lady Jane Grey.

What happened on Edward's death is one of the most dramatic stories of English history: in the absence of a law passed by parliament, and facing the forces of a surprisingly decisive Mary, Jane Grey's supporters crumbled. One of Edward's legacies was disgrace and execution for some of his closest allies and supporters. Like his father, however, Edward never let sentiment stand in the way of his kingly authority. Even at the age of 15, he made clear his voice and his will – and he expected his people to obey him. **H**

Stephen Alford is professor of early modern British history at the University of Leeds

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##### BOOK

► **Edward VI: The Last Boy King** by Stephen Alford (Allen Lane, 2014)



A full-length portrait of Mary II, painted by Hans Eworth. She is depicted from the waist up, seated, wearing a dark, richly textured gown with a large white ruffled collar. She wears a dark headpiece with a white band and a large, ornate pendant with a central square gemstone and a teardrop-shaped pearl. Her hands are visible at the bottom of the frame, adorned with multiple rings and holding a small bouquet of red and white flowers. The background is dark and indistinct.

Hans Eworth painted several portraits of Mary, all based on a sitting in 1554, around the time of her wedding to Philip of Spain. Here she wears the famous pearl later called La Peregrina, given to her by Philip a month before their marriage

COVER STORY

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# MARY: QUEEN AGAINST THE ODDS

‘Bloody Mary’ Tudor was long branded a religious bigot and a military failure. Yet as **Anna Whitelock** explains, the first woman to wear the crown of England was a political pioneer who redefined the monarchy

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**B**loody Mary was a Catholic bigot, a half-Spanish tyrant who burned nearly 300 Protestant men, women and children in one of the most ferocious periods of persecution in Reformation Europe. At least that's how subsequent (Protestant) writers painted her. John Foxe's classic martyrology, *Actes and Monuments* (popularly known as the *Book of Martyrs*), first published in 1563, graphically depicted "the horrible and bloody time of Queene Mary" and dominated accounts of Mary's reign for nearly 500 years.

In his *First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*, written on the eve of Mary's death, John Knox condemned Mary both as a woman ruler and a Catholic: she was a "horrible monster Jezebel" who "compelled [Englishmen] to bow their necks under the yoke of Satan". Traditionally viewed through the prism of her religion, Mary's five-year reign has been described as disastrous, unimaginative and ineffective, with no positive achievements.

Yet Mary was England's first acknowledged queen regnant: the first woman to wear the crown of England. It was a situation that her father, Henry VIII, had gone to great and infamous lengths to avert. But Mary more than met the challenge. In unprecedented circumstances she proved courageous and politically accomplished. Her reign redefined the contours of the English monarchy and proved that queens could rule as kings.

For much of her life Mary had struggled to defend her right to the throne – and even to preserve her life. After the breakdown of the marriage between her mother, Catherine of Aragon, and Henry VIII she was demoted from royal princess to bastard. She was, for a time, written out of the succession by her father and, though reinstated by the 1544 Third Act of Succession and by Henry's will, she remained illegitimate. When her nine-year-old brother Edward VI inherited the throne in 1547 and confronted Mary's Catholicism, she declared that she would rather "lay her head on a block" than forsake her faith. Her supporters urged her to flee abroad, but Mary remained in England, determined to defend her claim to the crown.

## Battle for the crown

Following her brother's death in July 1553, Mary – against all odds – won the throne in an extraordinary coup d'état.

Edward had written Mary out of the succession and instead named the Protestant Lady Jane Grey as heir to the throne. Before the king's death was made public, John Dudley, the Duke of Northumberland, had secured control of the Tower and had the royal artillery and



**Crowning glory** This manuscript illumination depicts Mary's accession, flanked by angels. Rebels who had sought to deny Mary the throne are shown being defeated in the background

coffers at his disposal. With London apparently secure, Lady Jane was proclaimed queen. When Mary received a tip-off that Edward's death was imminent and Northumberland planned to capture her, she fled across East Anglia. One of her supporters described this as an act of "Herculean rather than of womanly daring". At Framlingham Castle in Suffolk, Mary raised her standard and rallied the local gentry and commons to her cause. On 19 July she was proclaimed queen, and her accession was greeted joyously.

The scale of her achievement is often overlooked. Mary had led the only successful revolt against central government in 16th-century England. She had eluded capture,

mobilised a counter-coup and, in the moment of crisis, proved courageous, decisive and politically adept. By playing down her Catholicism and proclaiming her legitimacy, Mary secured both Catholic and Protestant support. She also ensured that the crown continued along the legal line of Tudor succession, in doing so, defending Elizabeth's position as her heir (though this wasn't made official until the final weeks of her life).

Having secured the throne, Mary then had to establish herself as a female monarch. It was an unprecedented position in a deeply patriarchal society – indeed, many questioned whether a woman could wear the crown. The monarch was understood to be God's



representative on Earth, a figure of defence and justice – a role premised on military might. The language, image and expectations of English monarchy and royal majesty were unequivocally male, and the rights of a queen regnant were a matter of great uncertainty.

Mary's accession had changed the rules of the game, and the nature of this new feminised politics was yet to be defined, yet in many respects Mary proved more than equal to the task. Decisions over the details of the practice and power of a queen regnant became precedents for the future. In April 1554 Mary's parliament passed the Act for Regal Power, which enshrined in law that queens held power as "fully, wholly and absolutely" as their male predecessors, thereby establishing the gender-free authority of the crown.

Mary's coronation saw her accepting the full regalia of a male monarch and assuming the sacral role that had hitherto been confined to kings. Previously, it had been precisely the exercise of this semi-priestly power, derived from the coronation, that – it was argued – precluded women from acceding to the throne. By continuing practices undertaken by previous kings – providing the healing touch for the 'king's evil' (scrofula) and blessing rings believed to cure cramp and epilepsy – Mary showed that the office of crowned monarch was not limited by gender.

Mary had stated a preference for remaining single but accepted the need to marry to fulfil her public duty to her faith and her kingdom. Everyone agreed on the need for a husband who could guide her in ruling, and produce a male heir, thereby securing the succession. Though it has traditionally been argued that Mary's marriage to Philip of Spain was unpopular, an alliance with Habsburg Spain was politically expedient. Certainly, the marriage treaty was as "favourable as possible for the interest and security and even the grandeur of England", with Mary's legal rights as queen preserved and Spanish influence kept to a minimum.

For some, though, this was not enough. In January 1554 Mary faced a Protestant rebellion led by Thomas Wyatt that aimed to prevent the match, but once again the queen rose to the occasion. Despite the urging of her councillors she refused to leave London;



**Miracle worker?** Mary places hands on a subject suffering from the 'king's evil', scrofula – believed to be cured by a monarch's touch

**"The regime was characterised as violently repressive, yet in many ways Mary's programme to convert hearts and minds was innovative and energetic"**

then, in a remarkable speech at the Guildhall, she attacked Wyatt as a wicked traitor, defended her religion and choice of husband, and called on Londoners to stand firm in support. Mary stressed her defiance, courage and commitment not by claiming to have the qualities of a man but, rather, to have these qualities as a woman. Mary's rousing rhetoric so mobilised the people of London that when Thomas Wyatt approached the Tower he found Ludgate barred against him. The rebels were compelled to lay down their arms and sue for mercy. Mary was manifestly an effective public speaker well before her sister Elizabeth garnered the plaudits.

Mary's reputation has been almost entirely defined by religion and summed up by the infamous epithet 'Bloody Mary'. Elizabethan

Protestants, who were the first to write the history of Mary's reign, characterised the regime as violently repressive, spiritually moribund and resoundingly unsuccessful. Yet in many ways Mary's programme to convert hearts and minds to Roman Catholicism was innovative and energetic. Led by Cardinal Reginald Pole, the programme of recatholicisation encouraged preaching and used the printing press to produce homilies and catechisms, and to foster a parochial revival of Catholicism.

Even the burnings – the accepted punishment for heresy at the time – were, it has been argued, broadly effective. Laymen were fully and enthusiastically involved in the work of detecting heretics, and by 1558 the numbers being burned were falling. The Marian church was proving successful in its mission – but then Mary died prematurely, after just five years of rule and with no Catholic heir.

### Forgotten victory

Traditional assessments of Mary's queenship have focused heavily on the apparent military failures of her reign, as epitomised by the loss of Calais in the Anglo-French war of 1557–59. Such a failure contrasts with Elizabeth's victory over the Spanish Armada in 1588. While Elizabeth is popularly remembered as a triumphant warrior queen, Mary is pilloried as achieving only national military humiliation.

Certainly, the loss of Calais has cast a long shadow over Mary's reputation. Yet assessments of Mary's military prowess should be rethought. Before the loss of Calais, she experienced successes. In August 1557, English and Spanish forces captured St Quentin, an action in which some 3,000 French troops were killed and 7,000 captured, including their commander Anne de Montmorency, the constable of France.

The news was greeted in England with widespread celebrations. London chroniclers heralded the success of "the king, our master" – Mary's husband was now accepted. The political community was motivated for the national war effort in King Philip's service. But, weeks later, the English experienced the humiliating defeat that would stamp a decisive imprint on Mary's reign. As the last remnant of the English claim to France, Calais had a



# The life of Mary Tudor



This portrait of the young Mary by Lucas Horenbout dates from around 1525

Mary is sent to a regional council in the Welsh Marches, reviving the **association of the heir with Wales**

18 February 1516

Mary is born to **Henry VIII** and Catherine of Aragon. She is their first surviving child, but Henry still hopes for a male heir, saying: "By the grace of God, sons will follow"

1525

Following the death of her mother, Mary finally acknowledges the invalidity of her parents' marriage, her own bastard status and Henry's position as **head of the church**

**Henry's marriage to Catherine is annulled.** Elizabeth is born to Anne Boleyn, and **Mary is declared a bastard**, no longer Henry's heir

1533

1536

Mary's **restoration to the line of succession** is confirmed by Henry's will. On Edward's accession she becomes heir to the throne

1547

Mary is crowned **England's first queen regnant** after a bloodless coup d'état following the attempt to install Lady Jane Grey (right) as monarch



1 October 1553

Mary and her consort, Philip, painted by Hans Eworth around 1558



Mary defeats the **rebellion led by Thomas Wyatt** (below left), and in July **marries Philip of Spain**. England is formally reconciled with Rome

1554

February 1555

The first of nearly **300 Protestant martyrs** is burned for heresy

21 March 1556

Former archbishop of Canterbury **Thomas Cranmer**, who had helped have Mary's parents' marriage annulled, **is burned**

April 1557

Two French ships land and 100 English rebels and French soldiers seize Scarborough Castle. **England declares war on France** and in August celebrates victory at St-Quentin

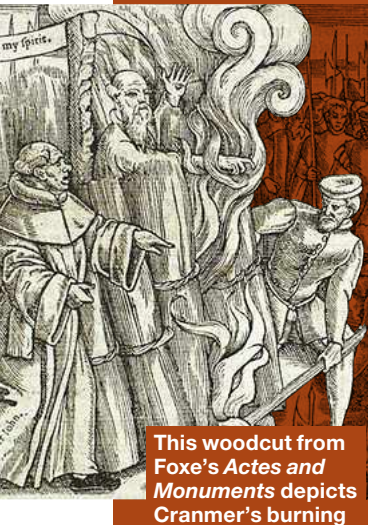
January 1558

**England loses Calais**, its last territory in France, and Mary experiences a second false pregnancy; **her health declines**

November 1558

Mary finally **acknowledges Elizabeth as her heir**, and dies 11 days later

**Elizabeth** was crowned queen on 15 January 1559



This woodcut from Foxe's *Actes and Monuments* depicts Cranmer's burning





**From victory to defeat** This contemporary engraving by Franz Hogenberg shows English troops and their Spanish allies besieging St-Quentin in 1557. They captured the town in August but, less than six months later, Calais – England’s last foothold in France – was lost

symbolic value that was out of proportion to its economic and military importance.

Despite the brevity of her reign, Mary extended royal authority in the localities, managed her parliament, rebuilt the navy, reorganised the militia and laid the foundations for reform of the coinage and the restructuring of the economy. New markets for exports were developed in Guinea, the Baltic and Russia, with the latter resulting in the formation of the Muscovy Company in 1558. The government’s overhaul of the book of rates in the same year also increased the crown’s revenues from customs. Statutes were passed that regulated the proper manufacture of particular wares and provided for more efficient and systematic production measures. Five hospitals were re-endowed by Mary, including the Savoy Hospital in London.

Mary proved to be a conscientious and hardworking queen who was determined to be closely involved in government business and policymaking. She would, as the Venetian ambassador recorded, rise “at daybreak when, after saying her prayers and hearing mass in private”, she would “transact business incessantly until after midnight”.

Mary ruled with the full measure of royal majesty and achieved much of what she set out to do. She won her rightful throne, married her Spanish prince and returned the country to Roman Catholicism. The Spanish marriage was a match with the most powerful ruling

“Her early death – in the midst of **disastrous harvest failures and a flu epidemic** – ensured that Mary’s reputation was fatally sealed”

house in Europe, and the highly favourable marriage treaty ultimately won the support of the English government. She had defeated rebels and preserved the Tudor monarchy. Her Catholicism was influenced by her humanist education and showed many signs of broad acceptance before she died. She was an intelligent, politically adept and resolute monarch – very much her own woman.

### Redefining the monarchy

Once seen as weak willed and lacking in leadership qualities, Mary is now heralded as courageous and warlike, educated for rule and politically determined. Her early death – in the midst of disastrous harvest failures and a flu epidemic, and soon after the loss of Calais – ensured Mary’s reputation was fatally sealed. If she had lived longer, her initiatives in religion and finance would have come to fruition; if she had borne a child, a Catholic future for England would have been assured.

Nevertheless, by securing the throne, Mary ensured that the crown continued along the legal line of Tudor succession. As the first queen regnant of England she redefined royal ritual and law, thereby establishing that a

female ruler, married or unmarried, would enjoy identical power and authority to male monarchs. Mary was the Tudor trailblazer, a political pioneer whose reign redefined the English monarchy.

Her successor had the advantage of being the second woman to rule. Though she would never acknowledge it, Elizabeth built on the foundations laid by her sister, and received from her an invaluable political education. After Mary’s death, the coronation robes of England’s first queen were hastily refurbished – with a new bodice and sleeves – to fit its second. This outfit was just one of many things Elizabeth borrowed from her predecessor. <sup>11</sup>

Dr Anna Whitelock is a historian and broadcaster based at Royal Holloway, University of London, and author of *Elizabeth’s Bedfellows: An Intimate History of the Queen’s Court* (Bloomsbury, 2013)

### DISCOVER MORE

#### BOOKS

► **Mary Tudor: England’s First Queen** by Anna Whitelock (Bloomsbury, 2010)

► **Mary Tudor: The First Queen** by Linda Porter (Piatkus, 2009)



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*BBC History Magazine* is Britain's bestselling history magazine. We feature leading historians writing lively and thought-provoking new takes on the great events of the past.

# Who was the real Edward VI?

The Tudor boy king is often painted as a sickly puppet. But as **Stephen Alford** – author of a new biography – reveals, he may actually have been much like his father.

he words are spare and fact-based. "The Duke of Somerset had his head cut off upon Tower Hill between eight and nine o'clock in the morning. Blunt, uncompromising, these are not the words of a masterful writer. Henry's 14-year-old son and heir, Edward VI, in 1552.

Somerset was Edward's uncle. The boy had been brought up by Henry's 14-year-old son and heir, Edward VI, in 1552. Somerset was Edward's uncle. The boy had been brought up by Henry's 14-year-old son and heir, Edward VI, in 1552. Somerset was Edward's uncle. The boy had been brought up by Henry's 14-year-old son and heir, Edward VI, in 1552.

and successors – the magnificent bulk of Henry VIII, apparently brutal ‘Bloody Mary’ and extraordinary Elizabeth – England’s last boy king perhaps looks, on first inspection, pretty insubstantial.

But Edward was England’s great unfinished king. He was an experiment in Protestant monarchy, the model against which his sister Elizabeth was later judged – and found wanting. He died a work still in progress. What evidence we have points to a king whose ability, vision and ambition would, with time, have matched those of his father.

When Henry's third consort, Jane Seymour, gave birth to Edward in 1537, Henry's strenuous and revolutionary efforts to secure a male royal succession were over at long last. Without the slightest compunction he put aside Princess Mary (born in 1516) and Princess Elizabeth (1533). Both were declared illegitimate by parliament and cut out of the succession, the latter situation reversed only in the final years of Henry's life.

From 1537 till his death, Henry threw his all into preparing for the throne the prince he called his and England's "precious jewel".

**Born to rule**  
All but one of the Tudors were accidental monarchs. Henry VII, Edward's grandfather, was a usurper, while three inherited the throne only because a sibling died. Edward was the single exception. He was born to rule: that his status was unimpeachable explains a lot about the young king and those who served him. Perhaps Henry VIII remembered how, as a boy, he'd been carefully protected after the death of his elder brother, Arthur, in 1502. He knew what it was like to have a heavy weight of expectation resting upon young shoulders.

Like any infant prince, Edward lived apart from his father and family. He had his own household, which moved between palaces and royal houses such as Hunsdon, Hatfield and Titchenham. Sometimes he spent time with his sisters, sometimes with Henry and his then queen, Katherine Parr. By the age of seven he was practising Latin grammar and composition by writing to all of his family, as well as to his godfather, Thomas Cranmer, archbishop of Canterbury, who was a hugely important influence throughout his life.

From a very early age, Edward felt the weight of duty: Portraits of the prince – from Hans

that he was weak and sickly, never likely to survive to manhood. Another is that he was a puppet, manipulated by powerful men. A third is that he was a precocious and brilliant intellectual. Less common today is the view that he was Protestant England's hero in its fight against the pope and the Catholic church.

Here we have half-truths and fantasies. So who was the real Edward? Can we get close to understanding his life and world without falling for an over-simplified heroism or a piece of religious propaganda? What evidence do we have? And what is the point of this?

The coin with a value of 12 pence first became available in 1968.

Hoibien the younger's infant Edward, produced in 1538, to a full-length painting of 1546 – proclaimed him as his father's son and heir. The latter, echoing Hoibien's famous (now lost) depiction of Henry VIII, shows Prince Edward, at eight or nine years old, facing the viewer as king-in-waiting. As Edward wrote to Katherine Parr: "I pray God I may be able in time to satisfy the good expectation of the king's majesty, my father, and of your grace."

Henry had been taught grammar, poetry, rhetoric, ethics and history, and believed absolutely in his own intellectual abilities. In his boyhood he had spent the courtier's scholar



The coin with a value of 12 pence first became known as a shilling.

0000-0001-9100-0000



“Edward was  
**England’s great  
unfinished king** –  
an experiment in  
Protestant monarchy.”

This portrait, probably produced by an artist in the workshop of court painter Hans Holbein, shows Edward – then Duke of Cornwall –

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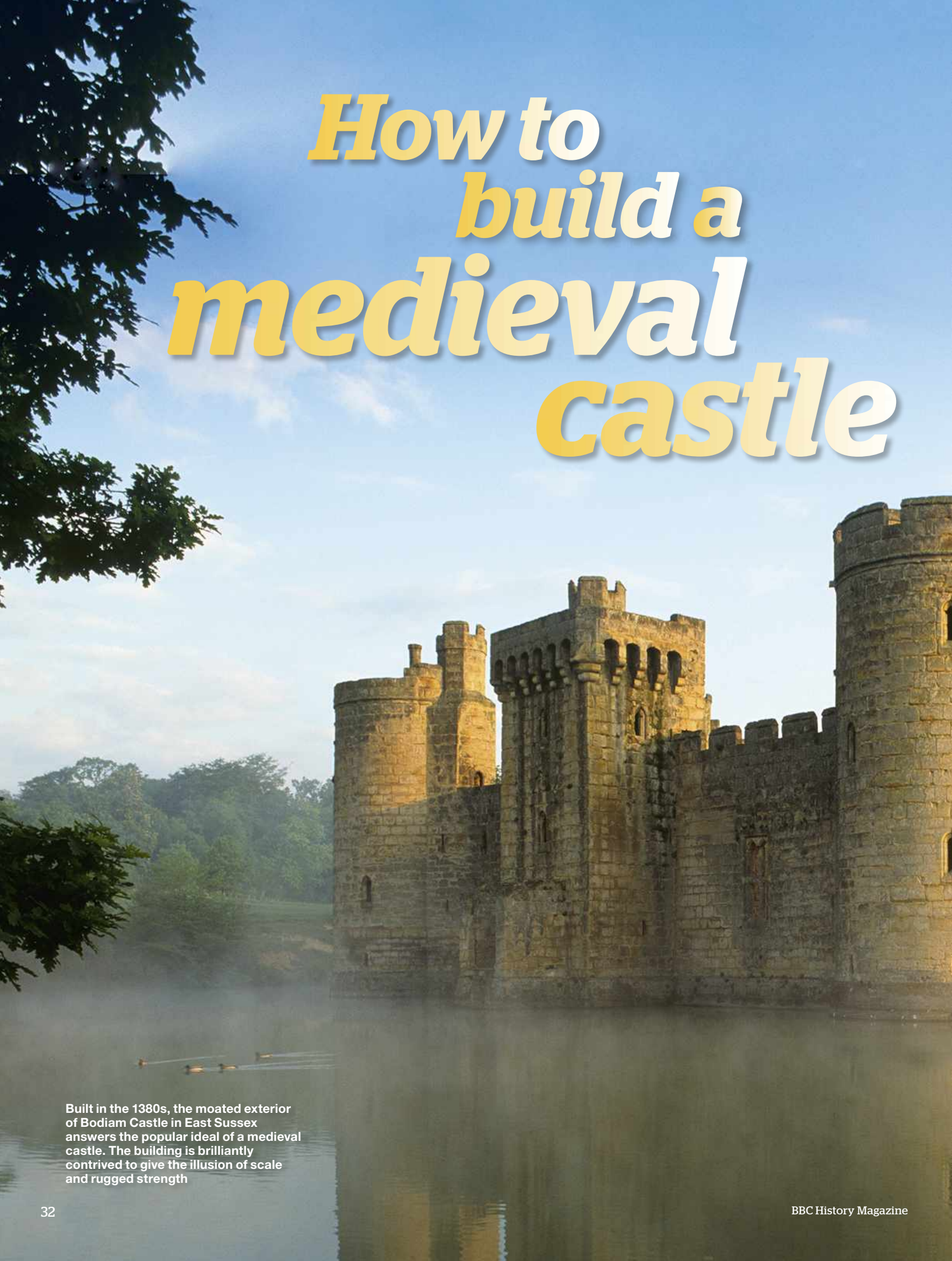


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# *How to build a medieval castle*

Built in the 1380s, the moated exterior of Bodiam Castle in East Sussex answers the popular ideal of a medieval castle. The building is brilliantly contrived to give the illusion of scale and rugged strength





The Norman Conquest triggered a boom in castle building, but the process of creating a fortress from scratch was far from simple, as **John Goodall** finds out

Complements the BBC Four series *Castles: Britain's Fortified History*





# 1 Choose your site carefully

It is crucial that you build your castle at a prominent site in a position of strategic importance

Castles were commonly erected on naturally prominent sites, usually commanding a landscape or a communication link, such as a ford, bridge or pass.

It is rare to have a medieval account of the circumstances behind the choice of a castle site but they do exist. On 30 September 1223, the 15-year-old king Henry III arrived in Montgomery with an army. The king, having campaigned successfully against the Welsh prince Llywelyn ab Iorwerth, was intent on creating a new castle in the area to secure the border of his realm. Carpenters in England had been charged with preparing timber for the new fortifications a month previously, but the king's advisers determined where the castle should be sited.

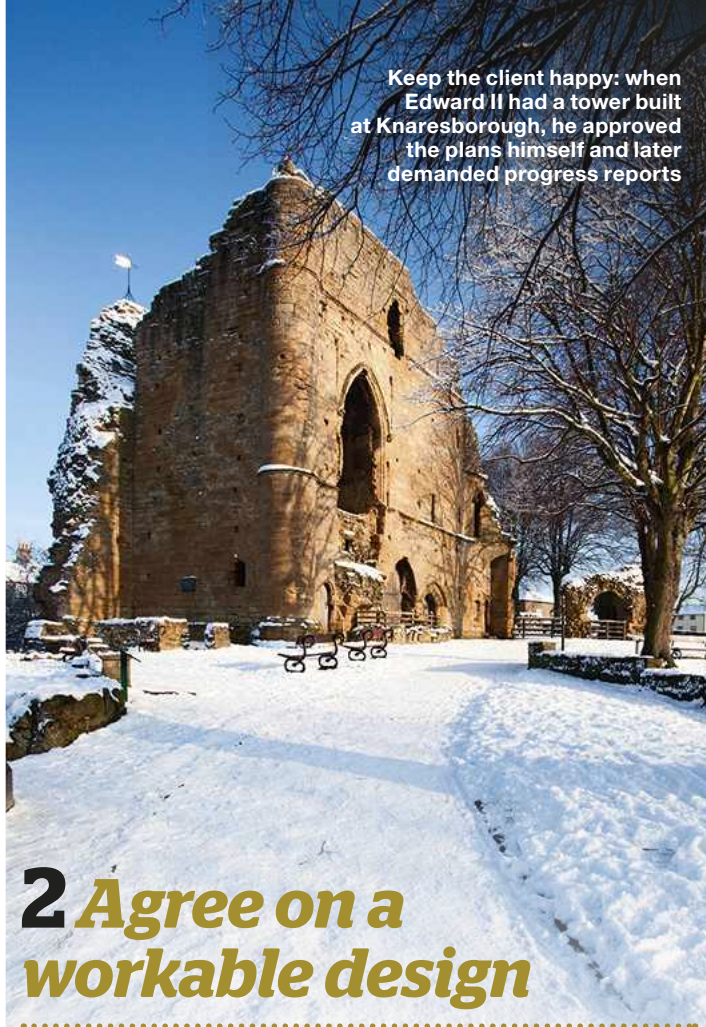
After surveying the area carefully they chose a spot on the very edge of a promontory above the valley of the river Severn. It was, in the words of the chronicler Roger of Wendover, a position "that seemed untakeable to everyone". He also observed that the castle was "for the security of the region on account of the frequent attacks of the Welsh".

When it was started in 1223, Montgomery Castle in central Wales was sited on high ground – on a promontory above the valley of the river Severn



### Top tip:

Identify the places where the topography dominates transport routes: these are natural sites for castles. Bear in mind that the castle's design will be shaped by the building's position. A castle on a high outcrop will, for example, have dry moats.



Keep the client happy: when Edward II had a tower built at Knaresborough, he approved the plans himself and later demanded progress reports

# 2 Agree on a workable design

A master mason who can draw plans is a must – while an engineer who knows all about weapons is useful too

Experienced soldiers may have had ideas of their own about the design of their castle, in terms of the form of the buildings and their arrangement. But it's unlikely they would have had any specialist knowledge in design or building.

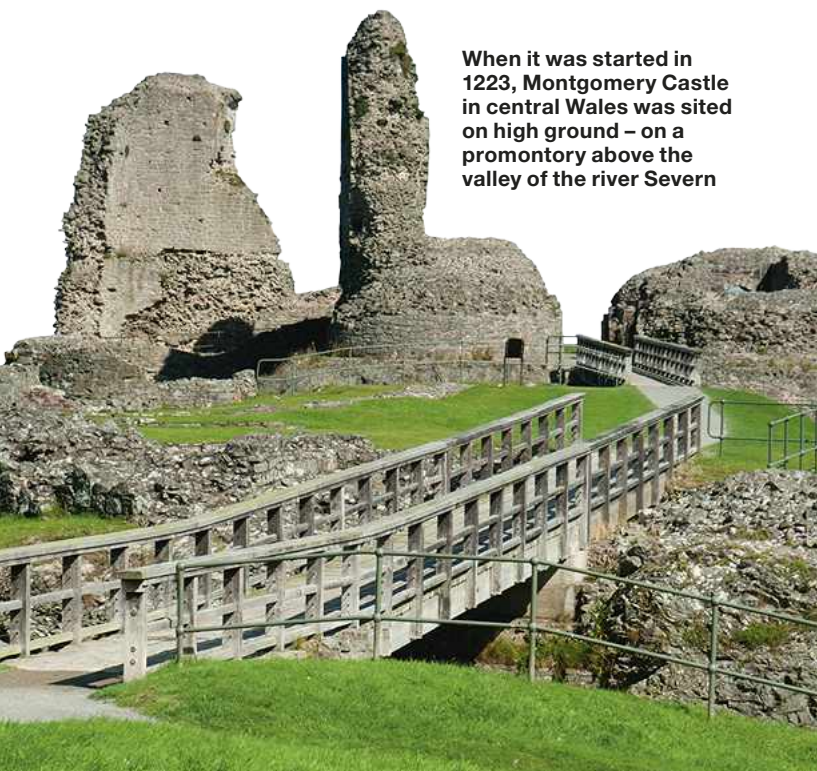
What was needed to realise a vision was a master mason – an experienced builder whose distinguishing skill was the ability to draw. With an understanding of practical geometry he used the simple tools of a measuring rod, set-square and compass to create architectural designs. Master masons would present a drawn proposal for the castle for approval and when building commenced would oversee its construction.

When Edward II began building a great residential tower at Knaresborough Castle in Yorkshire for his favourite, Piers Gaveston, in 1307, he not only approved the design, created by the London master mason Hugh of Titchmarsh – presumably expressed as a drawing – but also demanded from him regular reports on the progress of the work. From the mid-16th century, a new group of professionals, termed engineers, increasingly came to dominate the design and construction of fortifications. They had a technical understanding of the use and power of cannon, both in protecting and reducing castle defences.



### Top tip:

Plan arrow slits carefully for a wide field of fire. Shape according to the weapons you use: longbow men need large splays (the oblique angles in the side of an opening in a wall); crossbow men less so.





### 3 Source a large, and skilled, workforce

You'll need thousands of men - not necessarily all there by choice

The labour required to build a great castle was vast. We have no documentary evidence for the numbers involved in the first great round of castle-building in England, after 1066, but the scale of many castles of this period makes it clear why some chronicles speak of the English population as being oppressed by the castle construction of their Norman conquerors. In the later Middle Ages, however, surviving building accounts offer detailed information.

During his first invasion of Wales, in 1277, Edward I began building a castle at Flint, north-east Wales. This was erected at speed, using the massive resources of the crown. Within a month of starting work, in August that year, 2,300 men were employed on site, including 1,270 diggers, 320 woodmen, 330 carpenters, 200 masons, 12 smiths and 10 charcoal burners. All these men were pressed into service from across

the realm and accompanied into Wales with guards to prevent desertion.

In every period, foreign specialists were employed where necessary, often in senior roles. The millions of bricks needed to remodel Tattershall Castle, Lincolnshire during the 1440s, for example, were supplied by a certain Baldwin the 'Docheman' or Dutchman, evidently an immigrant.



#### Top tip:

Depending on the size of your workforce and the distance it has travelled, it may be necessary to provide accommodation on site.



Edward I employed 200 masons, like those shown above, on his castle at Flint in Wales



The building site of Rhuddlan Castle was protected by an outer wall. This formed a large enclosure that extended to the canalised river Clwyd

### 4 Secure the building site

A work-in-progress in hostile territory is extremely vulnerable to attack from the enemy before it is ready

In order to build a castle in hostile territory it was essential to protect the site from attack. One way of doing this was to enclose the construction area within a timber fortification or low stone wall. Such medieval defences have sometimes been preserved in the completed building as an outer apron wall, as can be seen at Beaumaris, Anglesey, begun in 1295.

No less important was the need to secure communications with the outside world for the delivery of building materials and supplies. In 1277, for example, Edward I canalised the river Clwyd at vast expense from the sea to his new castle at Rhuddlan. Here, the apron wall built to protect the building site extended down to the quay on the banks of the river.

There might also have been concerns for security during major alterations to an existing castle. When Henry II remodelled Dover Castle, Kent in the 1180s, his building operation appears to have been carefully staggered so that the fortifications were continuously defensible throughout the construction process.

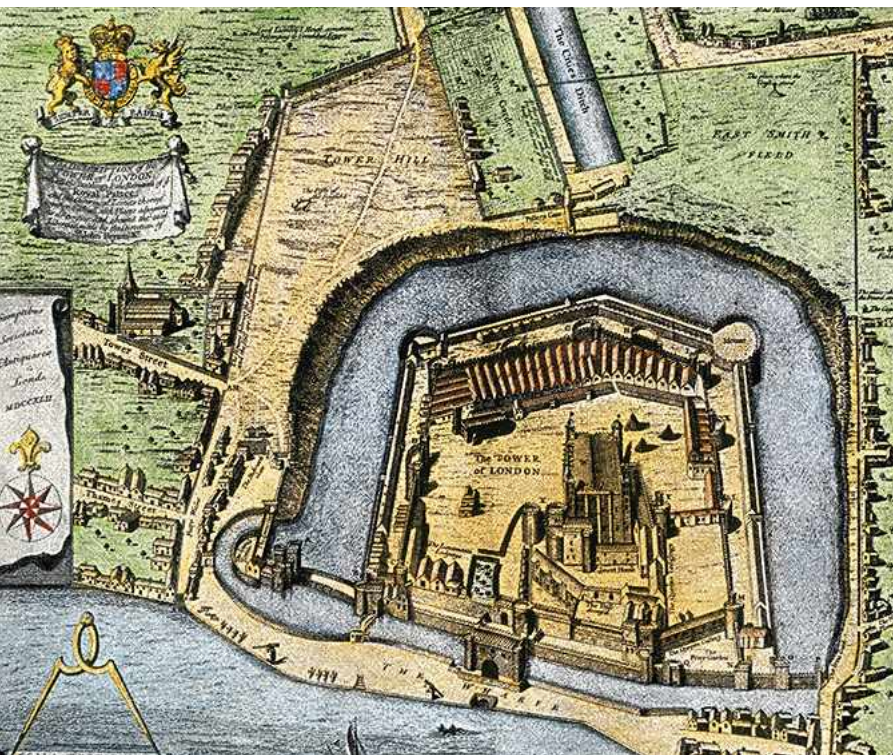
According to surviving royal accounts, work to the inner bailey wall was only begun when the great tower or keep was sufficiently complete to be garrisoned.



#### Top tip:

Castle-building materials are big and bulky. If at all possible, try and move them by water, even if you have to build a dock or canal to do so.





This 18th-century engraving of a 1597 plan of the Tower of London shows how huge volumes of earth had to be shifted to build moats or ramparts

## 5 Landscape the area

Building a castle might involve moving a massive amount of earth, at great cost

It is often forgotten that castle fortifications were as much works of landscaping as of architecture. The resources involved in moving earth without pieces of machinery was necessarily enormous. Even after long neglect, the scale of Norman earthworks in particular can be extraordinary. It has been estimated, for example, that the vast artificial mound, termed a motte, erected in around 1100 at Pleshey Castle, Essex, required 24,000 days of labour to raise.

Some aspects of landscaping were also highly skilled, notably the creation of moats filled with water. When Edward I remodelled the Tower of London in the 1270s, he employed a foreign specialist, Walter of Flanders, to create a huge new tidal moat around the site. The ditching work that Walter supervised cost more than £4,000 to complete, an enormous sum that was nearly a quarter of the cost of the entire project.

As the use of cannon improved in siege warfare, earth became yet more important as a means of absorbing the impact of cannonballs. Curiously, the ability to move vast quantities of earth allowed some fortification engineers to find work creating gardens.



### Top tip:

Save on labour, expense and time by digging the masonry of your castle walls from the ditches around the castle site.

## 6 Lay the foundations

Transfer the mason's plan carefully to the ground

Using measured lengths of rope and pegs, it was possible to set out the foundations of a building in full scale on the ground. This was done by walking out the actions of a master mason's drawing tools, his compass and set-square, to realise the plan. With foundation trenches dug, work began on the masonry structure. To save money, responsibility for construction was often deputed to a senior, rather than master, mason. The measurement of masonry usually used in the Middle Ages was the rod (16ft 6in, or 5m). At Warkworth, Northumberland, for example, the complex great tower is laid out on a grid of rods, probably for purposes of costing.

Medieval building processes are often well documented. In 1441–42, a tower at Tutbury Castle, Staffordshire was demolished and the plan for its successor laid out with ropes and pegs. The overseer, the Earl of Stafford, was for some reason dissatisfied. The king's master mason, Robert of Westerley, was sent to Tutbury where he consulted with two senior masons to design a new tower on a different site. Westerley then left and over the next eight years a small group of workmen including four junior masons realised their new tower.

Senior masons could also be brought in to attest to the quality of work, as occurred at Cooling Castle, Kent, when the royal mason Henry Yevele surveyed work undertaken from 1381–84. He criticised departures from the original design and rounded down the bill.

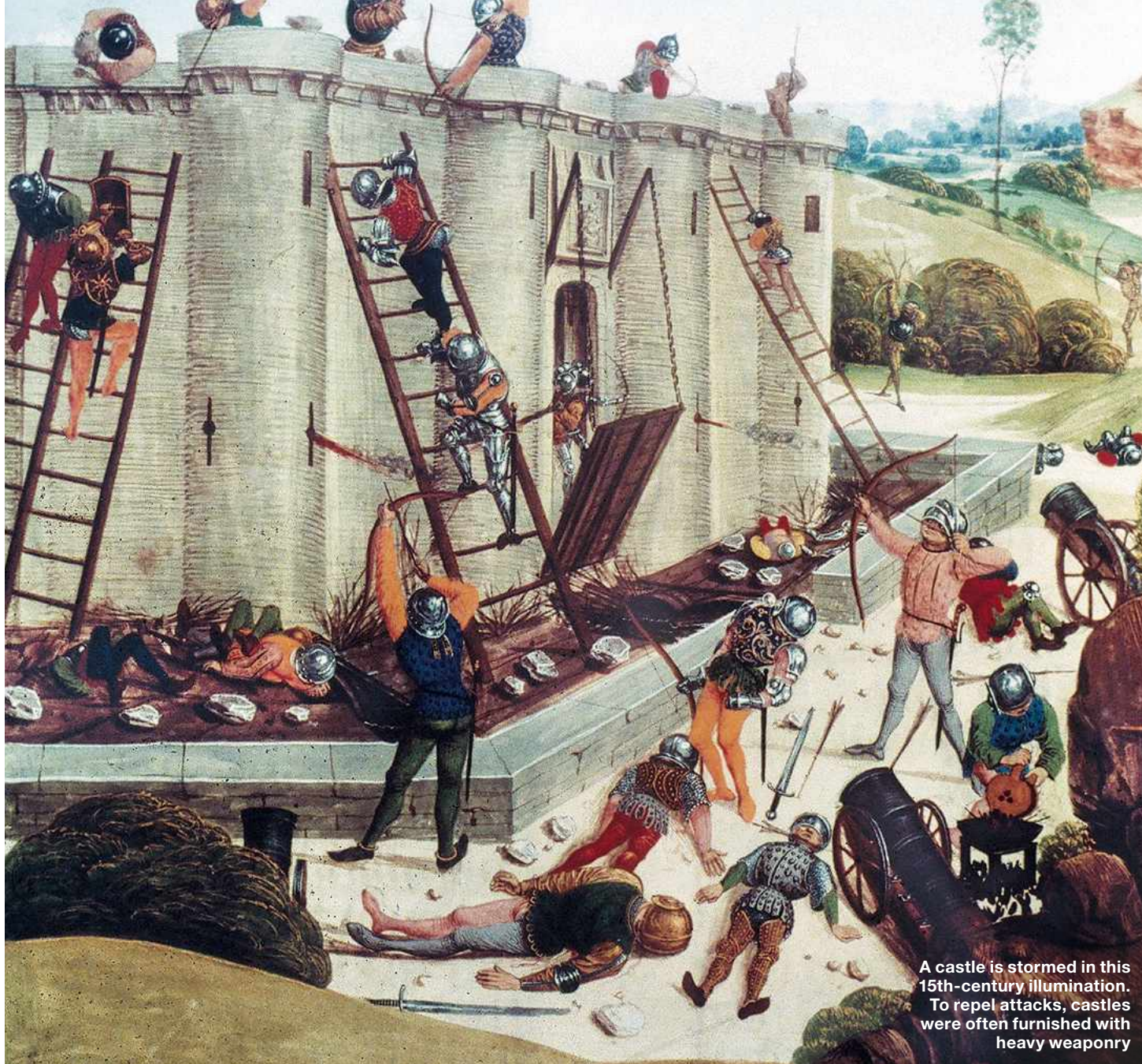


### Top tip:

Don't be cheated by your master mason. Make him design his building in such a way that it can be accurately costed.







A castle is stormed in this 15th-century illumination. To repel attacks, castles were often furnished with heavy weaponry

TOPFOTO



Measuring up. The great tower of Warkworth Castle, shown here, was laid out on a grid of rods



### Top tip:

Oak timber hardens with age after felling and is most easily worked when it is green. Pollarded trees (those with the upper branches removed) supply long clean limbs that can be easily transported and worked into shape with least labour.

## 7 Fortify your castle

Finish with sophisticated defences and high-spec carpentry

Until the 12th century, the fortifications of most castles were comprised of earth and timber. While stone buildings predominated thereafter, wood remained a very important material in medieval warfare and fortification.

Stone castles were commonly prepared for hostilities by the addition of fighting galleries along walls (termed 'brattices' or 'alures') as well as shutters that could be hung between battlements to afford the defenders protection. All these fittings were made of wood. So too were the heavy weapons that were used to defend castles, including catapults and heavy crossbows termed 'springalds'. This artillery was generally designed by a highly paid professional carpenter, sometimes termed an engineer or 'ingeniator'.

Such expertise didn't come cheap, but it could be worth its weight in gold. This was certainly the case in 1266, when Kenilworth Castle in Warwickshire resisted Henry III for nearly six months, its catapults and water defences frustrating every attack.

There is even the occasional record of campaign castles being made entirely from wood, which could be transported and re-erected where needed. One such was built to cover a French invasion of England in 1386 but was captured on a ship by the Calais garrison. The castle was described as comprising a dense wall of timber 20ft high and 3,000 paces long. At every interval of 12 paces there rose up a 30ft tower capable of holding 10 soldiers, and there was some form of unspecified protection for gunners.



## 8 Deal with water and sewage

Don't forget the mod cons. You'll appreciate them if the castle is ever besieged

It was essential that castles were provided with an effective water supply. This could take the form of one or more wells dug to serve particular buildings such as the kitchen or stable. It can be hard to appreciate the sheer scale of medieval well shafts without descending them. That at Beeston Castle, Cheshire has a shaft 100m deep, which is lined in cut stone for the first 60m.

There is also occasional evidence for the sophisticated use of water in domestic apartments. The great tower at Dover Castle possesses a system of lead pipes delivering water throughout the interior. It was fed from a well using a winch system and possibly from rainwater too.

The effective disposal of human waste was another problem confronting castle designers. Latrines were grouped together within buildings so that the shafts descending from them could empty out of a common outlet. They were also set down short corridors to contain smells and were often furnished with fixed wooden seats and detachable lids.

Castle latrines are often today popularly termed 'garderobes'. In fact, the vocabulary for describing latrines in the Middle Ages was both colourful and broad. It included the words gong or gang (from the Anglo-Saxon meaning 'the place to go'), privy and jake (a French form of 'john' or 'johnny').



The place to go: a gong, gang, privy or jake at Chipchase Castle

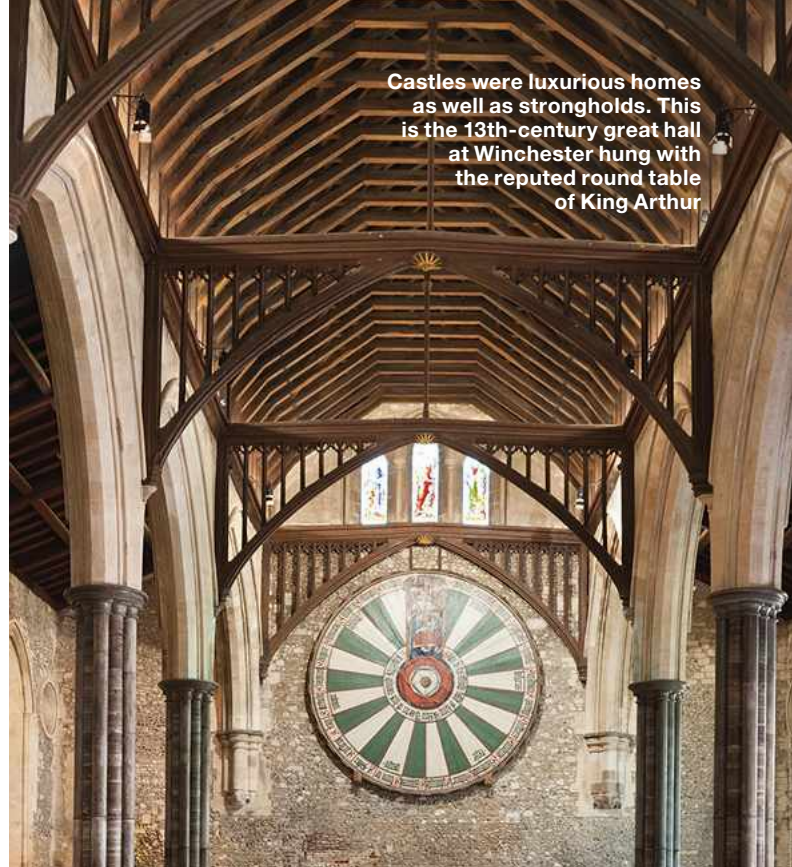


**Top tip:** Ask your master mason to plan comfortable and private en-suite facilities off the principal bed chamber, following the example of Henry II at Dover Castle.



**Top tip:** Make sure the castle interior is splendid enough to attract visitors and friends. Entertainment can win battles without the danger of fighting.

Castles were luxurious homes as well as strongholds. This is the 13th-century great hall at Winchester hung with the reputed round table of King Arthur



## 9 Decorate as required

A castle doesn't just have to be well defended - its high-status residents demand a certain swankiness too

Castles needed to be defensible in times of war but they also served as luxurious homes: the medieval nobility expected their accommodation to be both comfortable and well appointed. Throughout the Middle Ages these individuals travelled continuously with their attendant households, taking possessions and furniture with them from residence to residence. Important domestic interiors, however, commonly possessed permanent decorative fixtures such as stained-glass.

The decorative tastes of Henry III are recorded in particular and beguiling detail. In 1235-36, for example, he directed that his hall in Winchester Castle, Hampshire be painted with a map of the world and a 'wheel of fortune'. This decoration has since been lost but the majestic interior does preserve the reputed round table of King Arthur - probably created between 1250 and 1280.

The wider setting of castles was also important for grand living. Parks were laid out for the jealously guarded aristocratic privilege of hunting, and there was a demand for gardens, too.

The surviving building accounts for Kirby Muxloe Castle, Leicestershire reveal that its patron, Lord Hastings, began laying out the gardens at the very start of the building operations in 1480.

In the Middle Ages there was also a taste for rooms with fine views. One 13th-century group of rooms in castles that include Leeds in Kent, Corfe in Dorset and Chepstow, Monmouthshire, were named 'gloriette' after their splendour. **H**

**John Goodall** is an award-winning author, and architectural editor of the weekly magazine *Country Life*

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► **The English Castle** by John Goodall (Yale, 2011)

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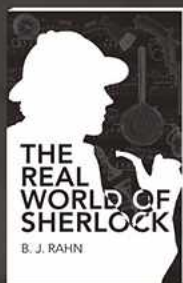
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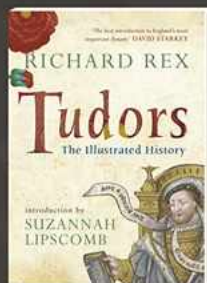


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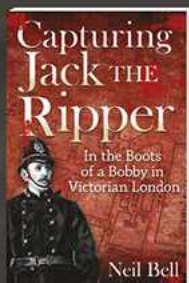
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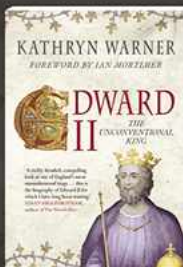
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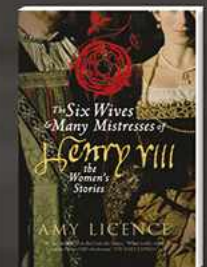
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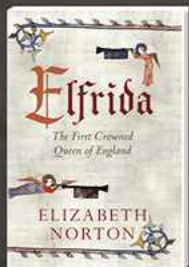
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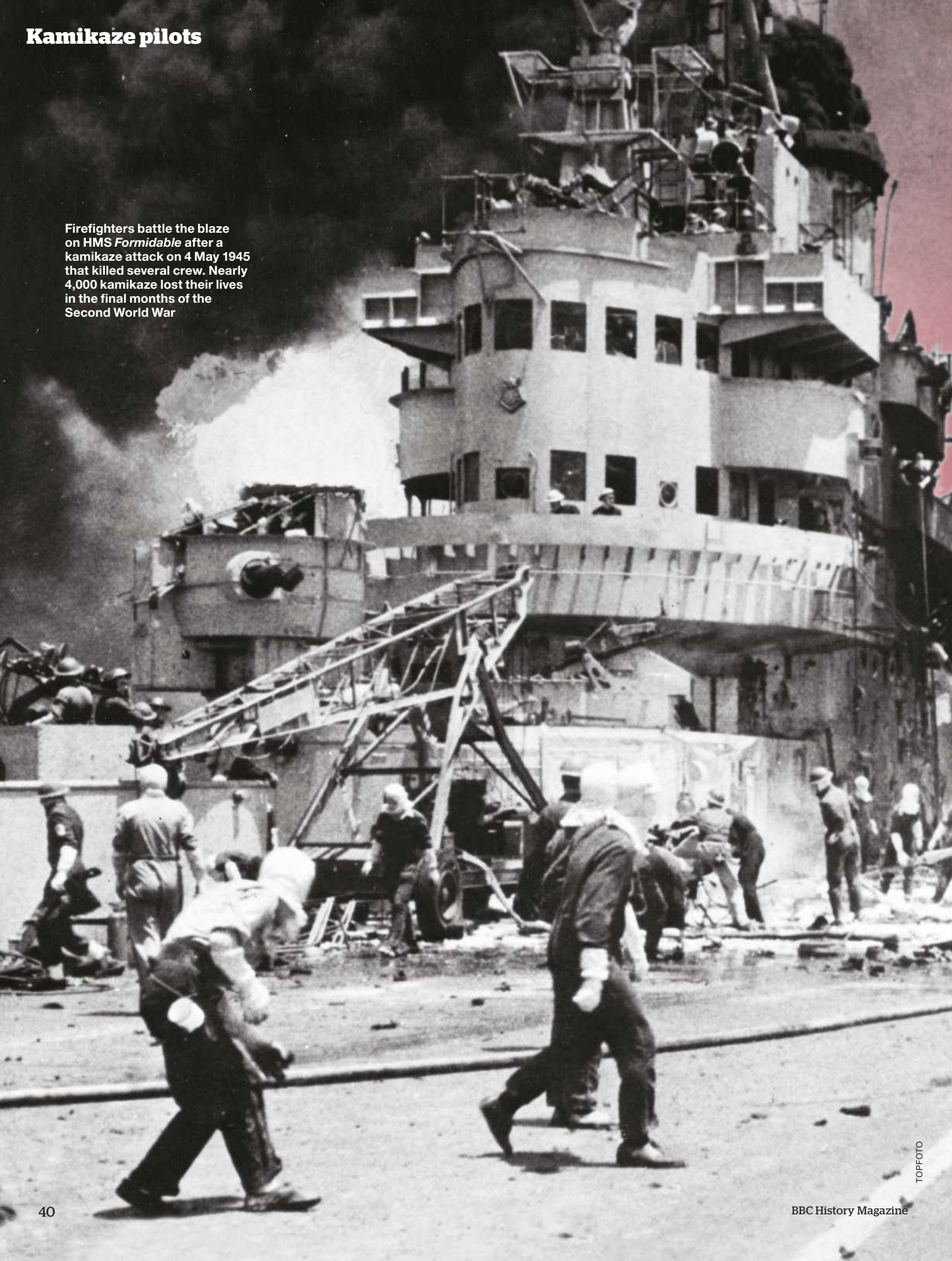
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## Kamikaze pilots

Firefighters battle the blaze on HMS *Formidable* after a kamikaze attack on 4 May 1945 that killed several crew. Nearly 4,000 kamikaze lost their lives in the final months of the Second World War





# The reluctant kamikaze

They've long been portrayed as brainwashed zealots lusting for destruction, death and glory.

Yet, as **Christopher Harding** reveals, many kamikaze stepped into the cockpit for the final time wracked with fear, confusion and anger at their fate





# Kamikaze pilots

On 12 April 1945, Ichizo Hayashi found himself inside a plane, screaming downwards through humid Okinawan air towards an American warship below.

There was no turning back. So heavy were the high explosives stuffed into the nose of his rattling Mitsubishi Zero that Hayashi would have been unable to pull the plane around even if he'd tried.

"Aim for the smokestack," he said to himself, dutifully recalling one of the kamikaze manuals. "Crash with your eyes wide open. Many have done so before you – they will tell you what fun they had."

Pulling up a little to skim the bright blue tropical sea, Hayashi saw the ship's guns begin to swivel in his direction. American servicemen gestured frantically to one another as they tried to aim an accurate shot at his plane before it was too late.

They failed. Badly buffeted by near misses, Hayashi managed to hold his course. Mere metres away, as the dull grey metal of the doomed ship filled his cockpit window, Hayashi shouted into his radio one last time: "*Tenno heika, banzai!*" ("Long live the emperor!") And then his world went black.

So, at any rate, ran the dreams of Hayashi's commanding officers – not one of whom volunteered for the sort of mission Hayashi undertook that day. In reality, few of those who flew the kamikaze sorties designed to stave off defeat in Japan's catastrophic war came from senior ranks or boasted much skill as pilots. Most kamikaze were young men who had seen the inside of a cockpit for the first time only a short while before their final, fateful mission.

## Volunteers or victims?

From October 1944, when the first attacks took place, to the end of the war, nearly 4,000 pilots flew kamikaze sorties – creating guided explosive missiles out of piloted planes.

Why did they do it? Why throw away a young life in an act of such spectacularly destructive suicide? For many years after the war, these questions were answered in the west through popular imagery of brainwashed zealotry, of reckless inhumanity. Even in Japan, the word *kamikaze* – coined by the military to recall the 'divine winds' that miraculously saved Japan from seaborne Mongol invasion in the 1200s – came to be used to admonish dangerous drivers or irresponsible skiers.

But the diaries, letters and poems of some of these pilots, belatedly making their way into English in recent years, tell a very different story. It is a far less comforting tale



A magazine cover from 1944-45 shows a kamikaze pilot in heroic mode

"One pupil declared: 'To die at the demand of the nation – I have no intention to praise it; **it is a great tragedy**'"

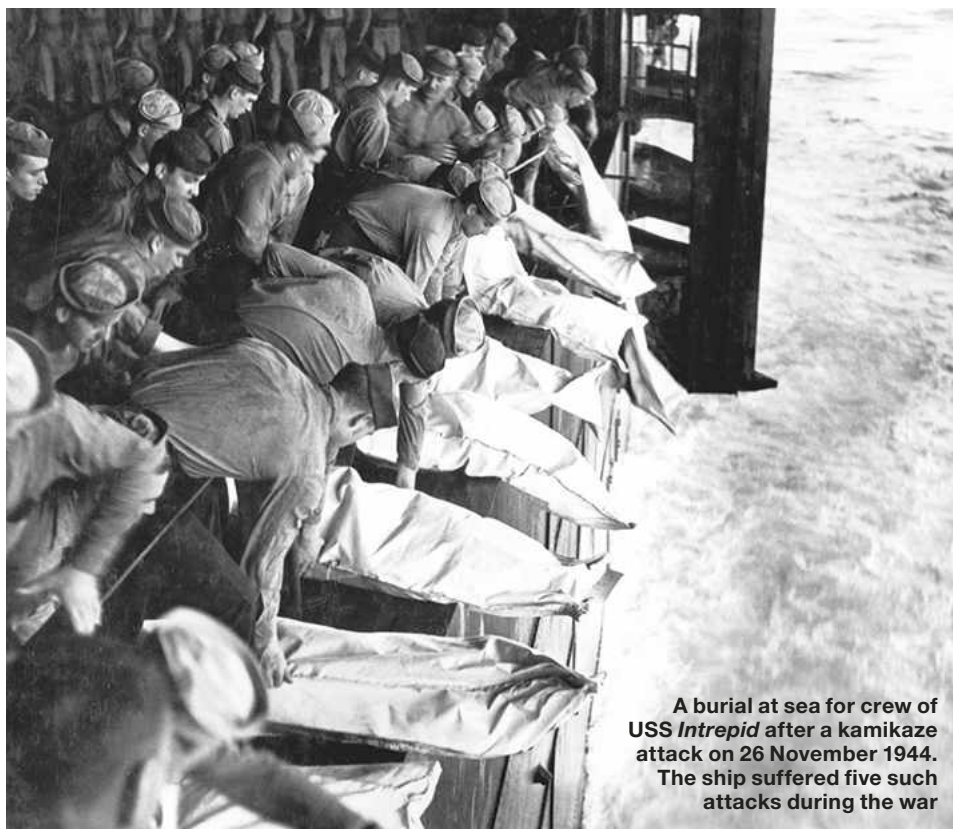
than the old one, because the real lives and deaths of young men like Ichizo Hayashi turn out to be more moderate and human than we might like to admit.

Hayashi was just nine years old when Japan's war with China began in 1931. It was soon to turn into a much wider conflict, billed by its military architects as 'existential'. In lessons and songs at school, in street parades and in swashbuckling magazine pieces about the military, the message was always the same: Japan is in danger from the racist, greedy empires of the west, and she must fight for survival.

The warning was reflected in everyday life: jazz and theatre-going gave way to martial music and shrine visits; electricity and food were rationed; the vivid colours and materials of Japanese dress faded and coarsened into the near-shapeless monochrome of 'national civilian uniform'.

Little wonder that some of Hayashi's fellow kamikaze pilots were convinced even while at high school that they would soon perish in combat. "I have to accept the fate of my generation to fight in the war and die," wrote one pupil – who didn't, however, think this fate right or fair. "We have to go to the battlefield to die without being able to express our opinions, criticise and argue... To die at the demand of the nation – I have no intention whatsoever to praise it; it is a great tragedy."

A few of those who went on from school



A burial at sea for crew of USS *Intrepid* after a kamikaze attack on 26 November 1944. The ship suffered five such attacks during the war





Japanese schoolgirls wave cherry blossom as they bid farewell to a kamikaze pilot heading for Okinawa in April 1945

to one of Japan's imperial universities saw their anxiety and fatalism turn to radical opposition. But by 1945 even they had opted for silence or had undergone a sudden 'conversion' of their views. Japan's 'thought police' were notoriously persuasive, sometimes starting out by cooking a homely meal – "Your mother is worried about you: now eat up, stop all this nonsense, and get on home" – and, if that didn't work, moving on to straightforward torture and 'accidental' deaths in custody.

For the rest, studying history or literature offered no more than a new, grander palette with which to paint the dark times into which they had been born. By 1944 the Allies were retaking Europe and Japan's empire was shrinking back towards the home islands. Students of the past came to see their imminent sacrifice as a part scripted for them by this and longer stretches of world history, as much as by the government in Tokyo busily churning out red conscription papers. As one

## Tragic deaths?

Was a kamikaze death honourable? Was it evil – or tragic? For Japanese military and newspaper supporters at the time, this was a picturesque form of self-sacrifice. The flower of the nation's youth was prepared to extinguish itself to keep that nation safe.

Cherry blossom, which in Japan blooms briefly and brilliantly, became a favoured symbol for the kamikaze. Young girls waved cherry branches laden with blossom as the pilots taxied out and some of the planes were painted with a cherry blossom symbol. For a society raised on glorified accounts of its own history, the legendary deaths of loyal samurai also came readily to mind – helped by military, media and educational establishments well versed in spinning symbols and stories into potent propaganda.

For a time after '9/11', the attack on the World Trade Center on 11 September 2001, the kamikaze were thought of, in the west at least, as early examples of

terrorist fanaticism. They had used spiritual techniques to prepare (many practised meditation), they had expected to be rewarded in the afterlife and had been utterly intent on their goal.

Most of these parallels have proven wide of the mark, and in recent years the mood has changed. For Japanese people, and increasingly in the west, these deaths now seemed a matter of military leaders refusing to admit the inevitability of defeat and condemning young people to deaths that were as horrific as they were unnecessary.

Some pilots no doubt fitted the stereotype of unreflective zeal and a yearning to become a 'war god' after death. But the loneliness and desperate search for meaning seen in kamikaze writings – by young men upon whom, as one pilot put it, "at the height of life... the curtain goes down" – point most powerfully to tragedy.



kamikaze pilot bluntly put it: “I made a mistake being born in this century”.

In no sense that they would have recognised were the likes of Ichizo Hayashi ‘committing suicide’ by signing up for and going through with their kamikaze missions. Hayashi had contemplated that step in the past. Now, the element of choice had disappeared. “Death is given to me,” he wrote.

Lovers of art, philosophy and nature, too, found meaningful stories to tell themselves, discarding trite, militarist slogans in favour of more inspiring thoughts: the flowers of their hometowns, the beauty of the moon over their military training bases, the faces of their families, and the better world to come after the war. In late 1943, a pilot named Hachiro Sasaki quoted approvingly from a children’s story: “I pray that we will see the day as soon as possible when we welcome a world in which we do not have to kill enemies whom we cannot hate. For this end, I would not mind my body being ripped innumerable times.”

Many of the pilots wrote as lyrically about sacrifice as they did about inevitability. They had heard about it, day in and day out, as the war gathered pace: from parents and teachers, from religious leaders and philosophers. Even Japan’s first psychotherapists became involved, lamenting the degeneration of western individualism into a diseased egotism and trying to help the youth of Japan to – as they saw it – balance their own desires with the needs of their families and society.

By December 1943, when university students were suddenly conscripted in their thousands, a positive case for war seemed to have become surplus to requirements. It was as though the more hopeless Japan’s situation became, the more acutely the call was felt to give whatever one had: “For our nation,” one of the pilots commented, “enormously poor in material resources, the last [form of] capital is the body.”

## Fear of death

Marched out of their classrooms and into great army and navy halls, these students were asked in front of their peers if they wished to volunteer for the kamikaze corps. For most, the great issue at stake – life or death – had been decided long ago, and not by them. They stepped forward.

Over the next few months, these ‘volunteers’ – including the few who had held back, only to find their names added to the list anyway – spent their days receiving severe newbie beatings and a meagre pilot training, and their nights struggling to



A pilot puts on his *hachimaki*, a bandana featuring Japan’s Rising Sun symbol, worn as a symbol of patriotism and courage

“At least one strafed his own base.... many kamikaze sabotaged their planes or deliberately steered them into the sea, well short of their targets”

keep their heroic romanticism intact. Ichizo Hayashi wrote in his diary: “It is easy to talk about death in the abstract, as the ancient philosophers did, but it is real death I fear. [Japanese military personnel] are killing infants and innocent civilians in China... but there is no more time for me to escape.”

A good many pilots adopted the views of their new comrades and superiors, their writings turning from poetry and history to stereotyped and rather unconvincing anticipations of glorious and beautiful deaths. Few kept it up. They soon dissolved back into confusion and longing – for families and lovers, for release from the sheer absurdity of their situation.

It rapidly became too much. Pilots drank and rioted in their barracks, or took their good-luck sashes – each one crafted intricately from a thousand civilian stitches – and burned them in disgust. At least one pilot strafed his own base shortly after taking off for his final flight. Many kamikaze sabotaged their planes or deliberately steered them into the sea, well short of their targets.

In the end, the kamikaze strategy proved nowhere near as effective as hoped.

Early attacks enjoyed the element of surprise, but once the Americans knew what to expect and had their radar systems operational, heavy and barely manoeuvrable planes made for pitifully easy prey. Nearly 4,000 pilots died, against the loss of 40 or so American ships.

If anything, the missions made things worse for Japanese at home.

Resistance on islands such as Saipan and in the skies near the mainland helped convince the Americans that the secret weapon they were developing in the desert of New Mexico might be the only way to end the war. Hiroshima and Nagasaki were among the cities being spared conventional bombing for the time being, the better to assess the new weapon’s power.

No one knows how 12 April 1945 really ended for Ichizo Hayashi. But this is how it began. Alongside the rising sun headband and the pure white scarf that formed the legendary attire of the kamikaze pilots, Hayashi stepped into his plane carrying three things: a Bible, a copy of Søren Kierkegaard’s *The Sickness Unto Death*, and a photograph of his mother. The two of them were Christians: the final layer of meaning – of inevitability – about the war and Hayashi’s unsought part in it was that, in his last words to his mother: “All is in God’s hands”.

“This is like a dream,” he wrote. “Tomorrow, I am no longer alive. Those who went on sortie yesterday are all dead – it doesn’t feel real. I wonder if I will be allowed to enter heaven. Mother, please pray for me. I cannot bear the thought of going to a place where you will not join me later.” **H**

.....  
**Christopher Harding** (@drchrisharding) is a lecturer in Asian history at the University of Edinburgh. He has appeared on the BBC Radio 3 programme *Free Thinking*

## DISCOVER MORE

### BOOKS

► **Kamikaze Diaries: Reflections of Japanese Student Soldiers** by Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney (University of Chicago Press, 2006)

► **Religion and Psychotherapy in Modern Japan** by Christopher Harding et al (eds) (Routledge, 2014)

► **Valley of Darkness: The Japanese People in World War Two** by Thomas Havens (University Press of America, 1986)

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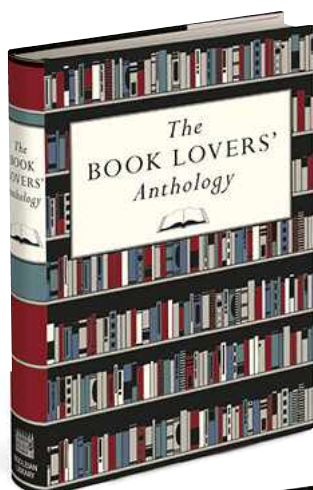
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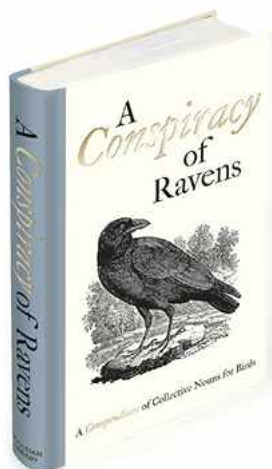
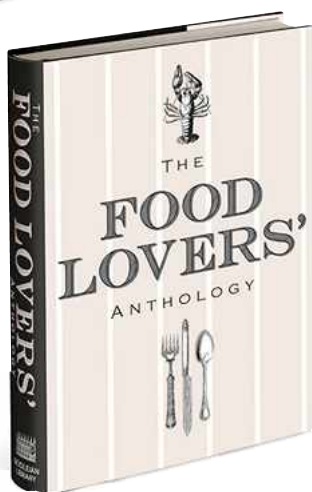
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A fragment of a statue of the female pharaoh Hatshepsut. By ruling in her own right, Hatshepsut has often been cast as exceptional, yet at least seven women wielded supreme power in ancient Egypt



# THE **FEMALE** **'KINGS'** OF ANCIENT EGYPT

Cleopatra the Great has become virtually synonymous with the term 'female pharaoh'. Yet, as **Joann Fletcher** reveals, Mark Antony's famous wife was merely the culmination of three millennia of women rulers



According to the ancient Egyptians, the entire universe was made up of masculine and feminine elements, maintained in a state of perfect balance by the goddess Maat. Her numerous fellow deities included a male earth god and female sky goddess. While the green-hued Geb lay back, his star-spangled sister Nut stretched herself high above to form the expanse of sky, hold back the forces of chaos, and give birth to the sun each dawn.

Nut was the mother of twin deities Isis and Osiris. Isis was the active partner to her passive brother Osiris, whom she raised from the dead to conceive their child, Horus. Isis was also regarded as 'more powerful than a thousand soldiers'. This same blend of nurturer and destroyer was shared with Hathor, goddess of love and beauty, capable of transforming into Sekhmet, a deity so fierce that male pharaohs were said to 'rage like a Sekhmet' against enemies in battle.

Such mixing of the sexes was not confined to myth, since Egypt's women were portrayed alongside men at every level of society. This no doubt explains why the Greek historian Herodotus was forced to conclude that the Egyptians "have reversed the ordinary practices of mankind" when visiting Egypt around 450 BC.

So while the most common female title in Egypt's 3,000-year history was 'lady of the house' (housewife), many women worked in the temple hierarchy. Other women were overseers and administrators, or they held titles ranging from doctor, guard and judge to treasurer, vizier (prime minister) and viceroy.

And some women were also monarchs, from the regents who ruled on behalf of underage sons to those who governed in their own right as pharaoh, a term simply meaning 'the one from the palace'. Yet some Egyptologists still downgrade female rulers by defining them by the relatively modern term 'queen', which can

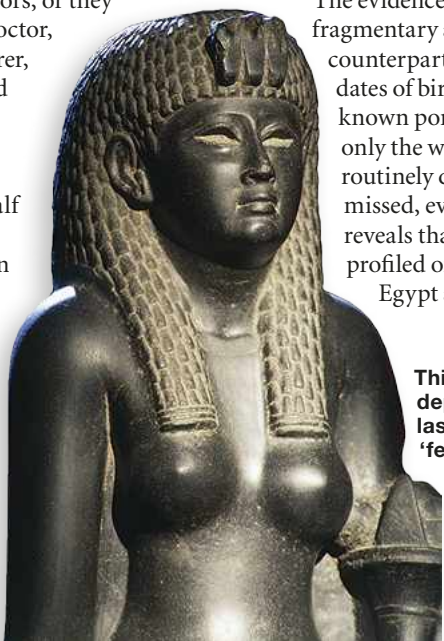


This image from the coffin of the temple official Pakher-enkhonsu shows Amentet, goddess of the west, who protected dead souls

simply refer to a woman married to a male king. And while the c15th-century BC Hatshepsut ruled as a pharaoh in her own right, she is still often regarded as the exception that proves the rule – even though the evidence suggests there were at the very least seven female pharaohs, including Nefertiti and the great Cleopatra.

These well-known names were simply drawing on female predecessors dating back to the beginning of Egypt's written history and the first such ruler, Merneith (whose reign is dated to around 2970 BC). When her tomb was discovered, at Abydos in 1900, it was claimed that "it can hardly be doubted that Merneith was a king", until the realisation that 'he' was a 'she' saw her status switched to 'queen'. Her name nonetheless appeared on a list of Egypt's earliest kings which was discovered in 1986.

The evidence for female rulers is as fragmentary as it is for many male counterparts – with few known dates of birth or death, and no known portraits for many. Yet, only the women's titles are routinely downgraded or dismissed, even when the evidence reveals that some, like those profiled on these pages, did rule Egypt as pharaoh.



This statue is thought to depict Cleopatra, the last in a long line of 'female kings' to rule ancient Egypt in their own right

## Khentkawes I:

**Title:** Mother of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, [holding office as] King of Upper and Lower Egypt  
**Born:** c2550–2520 BC, possibly at the royal capital Memphis  
**Died:** c2510–2490 BC

One woman whose status has long been debated is Khentkawes I. She was the daughter of King Menkaure, and the wife of King Shepseskaf (ruled c2510–2502 BC), and bore at least two further kings – with new evidence supporting the possibility that she herself also ruled Egypt.

Khentkawes I's funerary complex was as elaborate as the nearby pyramids of her male predecessors – so elaborate, in fact, that her tomb has been dubbed the Fourth Pyramid of Giza. It had its own funerary temple, a causeway and, says Ana Tavares, joint field director of the current excavations at her Giza tomb site, "quite exceptionally, a valley temple and a basin/harbour, which suggests that she reigned as a pharaoh at the end of the fourth dynasty".

In fact Khentkawes I's kingly status was suggested as early as 1933 by Egyptian archaeologist Selim Hassan during his initial excavation of her tomb. For here

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## Sobeknefru: The crocodile queen

**Title:** King of Upper and Lower Egypt

**Born:** c1830–1815 BC, possibly Hawara in the Fayum

**Died:** c1785 BC



Despite evidence that some women held kingly powers during the third millennium BC, the first universally accepted female pharaoh is Sobeknefru. Daughter of Amenemhat III, who she succeeded in c1789 BC to rule for approximately four years, Sobeknefru appeared on official king lists for centuries after her death.

The first monarch named after crocodile god Sobek, symbol of pharaonic might, Sobeknefru took the standard five royal names of a king – Merytre Satsekhem-nebettauy Djedetkha Sobekkare Sobeknefru – with the epithet Son of Ra (the sun god) amended to Daughter of Ra. Her portraits blended male and female attributes, the striped royal headcloth and male-style kilt worn over female dress.

Sobeknefru is also depicted in the cloak associated with her coronation. Yet a more complete portrait was identified as Sobeknefru in 1993, and it's in this that the strong family resemblance to her father, Amenemhat III, can be seen.

Sobeknefru created temples at the northern sites Tell Dab'a and Herakleopolis, and also completed her father's pyramid complex at Hawara. She seems to have built her own pyramid at Mazghuna near Dahshur, but no trace of her burial has been found. If she is mentioned at all in modern histories, it is only to be dismissed as the last resort of an otherwise male dynasty. Yet the throne passed smoothly to a succession of male kings who followed her lead by naming themselves after the crocodile god.

Her innovations inspired the next female pharaoh Hatshepsut (ruled c1479–1458 BC), who adopted the same kingly regalia and false beard. The modern tendency to cast Hatshepsut as a cross-dresser is only possible because her female forerunners

have been played down or ignored. Such is the case with Nefertiti. She is judged almost entirely on her beautiful bust, yet evidence suggests she wielded the same kingly powers as her husband and may have succeeded him as sole ruler.

Her example was followed by the 12th-century BC female pharaoh Tawosret, whose titles included Strong Bull and Daughter of Ra. She was the last female pharaoh for almost a thousand years, the final millennium BC being marked by successive foreign invasions of Egypt. The most successful of these were the Macedonian Ptolemies, claiming descent from Alexander the Great and ruling for the last three centuries BC. Their Egyptian advisor Manetho created the system of royal dynasties we still use today. He named five of the female pharaohs, stating that "it was decided that women might hold the kingly office" as early as the second dynasty, in the early third millennium BC.

**ABOVE: A bust of Sobeknefru, the first accepted female pharaoh. Below: Nefertiti's beauty distracts from the possibility she ruled Egypt**



## The mother of Egypt

she was portrayed enthroned, holding a sceptre and wearing both the royal 'uraeus' cobra at her brow and tie-on false beard of kingship combined with her traditional female dress.

The tomb also revealed Khentkawes I's official titles in a hieroglyphic inscription, initially translated as 'King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Mother of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt' until British Egyptologist Alan Gardiner found a "philologically tenable" alternative translation meaning that Khentkawes I had only been 'the mother of two kings' rather than a king herself. Yet in light of the new archaeological evidence, her ambiguous title is now interpreted as 'Mother of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, [holding office as] King of Upper and Lower Egypt'.

Khentkawes I certainly left her mark at Giza, where memories that a female ruler had built a great tomb persisted for two millennia. Yet she was by no means unique, for within a couple of decades her descendant Khentkawes II held the same titles, was again portrayed with the royal cobra at her

brow, and had her own pyramid at the new royal cemetery, Abusir.

There was even a third such woman whose pyramid complex at Sakkara was so large some Egyptologists have suggested she had 'an independent reign' at the death of her husband, King Djedkare, in c2375 BC. But this mystery ruler remains anonymous and forgotten, for not only was her name erased from her tomb complex after her death, the 1950s excavation of her tomb was never published and it remains the Pyramid of the Unknown Queen.

**The splendour of Khentkawes I's tomb complex, 'the Fourth Pyramid of Giza', suggests she was a pharaoh**





# Arsinoe II: The queen and female king

**Titles:** Queen of Macedonia (& Thrace), King of Upper and Lower Egypt

**Born:** c316 BC, most likely at Memphis

**Died:** probably 16 or 17 July 268 BC

The legacy of Egypt's female pharaohs certainly inspired Arsinoe II. Married to two successive kings of Macedonia, Arsinoe II then returned to her Egyptian homeland and the court of her younger brother Ptolemy II, marrying him to become queen for a third time. Yet she also became his full co-ruler, with the same combination of names as a traditional pharaoh.

Although these titles were long assumed to have been awarded posthumously, recent research has revealed that Arsinoe II was acknowledged as King of Upper and Lower Egypt during her own lifetime. Like Hatshepsut over a thousand years earlier, Arsinoe became Daughter of Ra and adopted the same distinctive regalia to demonstrate continuity with past practice. Further exploiting Egyptian tradition, Arsinoe was likened to the goddess Isis,

twinned with her laid-back brother-husband Osiris. As married siblings, Arsinoe and Ptolemy were equated with classical deities Zeus and Hera for their Greek subjects.

Joint portraits of Arsinoe and Ptolemy highlighted the family resemblance to putative uncle Alexander, whose mummified body, entombed in their royal capital Alexandria, was further evidence of their divinely inspired dynasty.

This too was a relationship Arsinoe exploited to the full, from her subtle adoption of Alexander's trademark ram's horns to staring eyes so large some medical historians claim she must have suffered from exophthalmic goitre, a disease that often affects the thyroid.

Arsinoe II certainly used her multi-faceted public image to great effect in her political dealings, when she and Ptolemy II became the first of Alexander's successors to make official contact with Rome in 273 BC.

Then, when Egypt joined Athens and Sparta against Macedonia in the Chremonidean War, Arsinoe's lead role was acknowledged in an Athenian decree stating that Ptolemy II was "following the policies of his ancestors and his sister". Athens also honoured the couple with statuary, as did Olympia, where Arsinoe achieved great success in the Olympic Games of 272 BC when her teams won victories in all three chariot races on a single day.

Most of Arsinoe's images were in Egypt, where, according to inscriptions set up in the temple at Mendes, it was decreed that "her statue

**This statue of Arsinoe II identified her with the goddess Isis – thanks, in part, to the so-called 'Isis knot' on her right shoulder – so exploiting Egyptian tradition to strengthen her image**

be set up in all the temples. This pleased their priests for they were aware of her noble attitude toward the gods and of her excellent deeds to the benefit of all people."

In Egypt's new capital, Alexandria, Arsinoe's influence was even stronger. Continuing Ptolemaic tradition by spending vast sums on the Great Library and Museum, she personally financed spectacular public festivals with which to impress her subjects, even if fragments of a lost biography reveal her sneering at the "very dirty get-together" of the crowds as they celebrated in the streets beyond her lavish palace.

## Dazzling legacy

Having transformed the Ptolemaic house into a dazzling bastion of conspicuous consumption, 48-year-old Arsinoe died in July 268 BC and was cremated in a Macedonian-style ceremony. Her memory was kept alive at the annual 'Arsinoeia' festival, and in the renaming of streets, towns, cities and entire regions in her honour, both in Egypt and around the Mediterranean.

Her spiritual presence was so strong that for the next 22 years of Ptolemy II's reign, he never remarried and continued to appear with his deceased wife in official portraits, naming her on official documents and issuing her coinage.

As the first Ptolemaic woman to rule as a female king, Arsinoe's achievements were then replicated by the women of her dynasty, the last of whom was Cleopatra the Great.

Cleopatra was the final, and of course most famous, culmination of three millennia of Egypt's female pharaohs. **H**



**The Gonzaga Cameo thought to show Ptolemy and Arsinoe, who was the first Ptolemaic woman credited with ruling Egypt as a 'female king'**

**Professor Joann Fletcher** is based in the department of archaeology at the University of York. She presented the BBC Two documentaries *Egypt's Lost Queens* and *Ancient Egypt: Life and Death in the Valley of the Kings*

## DISCOVER MORE

### BOOKS

► **The Search for Nefertiti** by Joann Fletcher (Hodder & Stoughton, 2005)

► **Cleopatra the Great** by Joann Fletcher (Hodder & Stoughton, 2008)



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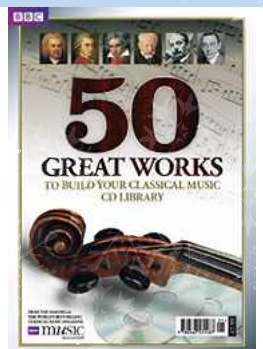
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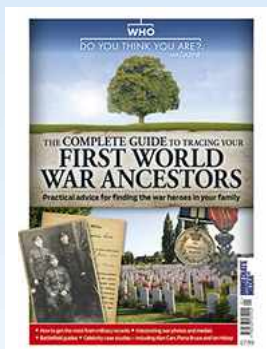
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# *“I love my religion but I love my*

Laws passed in the 1840s should have put that didn't stop determined men from



The Duke of Wellington (right) fires his pistol at the Earl of Winchilsea in a duel at Battersea Fields, in an 1829 cartoon. Many Britons were appalled by the spectacle of the prime minister risking his life in such an archaic practice

Victorian travellers boarding a London-bound train in Weybridge would have thought nothing of encountering a party of gentlemen armed with sketchbooks. The

picturesque Surrey town had become a popular destination for metropolitan artists in the mid-19th century. What *would* have surprised fellow passengers, though, was that on a May day in 1852 the sketchbook cases actually contained duelling pistols.

Equally shocking was the identity of the duellists: two parliamentary candidates for Canterbury: Colonel Romilly MP and the Hon G Smythe. The combatants were unhurt but rode in grim silence, their moods darkened – and perhaps their aim disturbed – by a pheasant bursting from the undergrowth at the critical moment in their duel.

However, Romilly and Smythe did not remain mute once they were back in London. In fact, no sooner had they stepped off the train than they were announcing their encounter in a newspaper. This declaration must have perplexed readers at their breakfast tables and on their way to work – after all, the same newspaper had been boasting for a decade that duelling was dead.

## **Ruined reputations**

Honour has always been at the heart of duelling. What separated a fatal fight with swords or pistols from a common murderous assault was its potential to restore wounded honour. Centuries before Romilly and Smythe's encounter, medieval lawmakers had added verbal insults to existing codes proscribing physical assault and murder. In doing so, they sent out a clear message: to ruin someone's reputation was tantamount to depriving them of life itself.

Contests decided by single combat, such as



# very well, honour more”

an end to duelling but, says **Margery Masterson**, settling a dispute with pistols at dawn

jousts, were central to medieval courts. By the early modern period, the idea of defending individual honour – as opposed to fighting for a liege lord – was flourishing among the aristocratic classes. This is how the modern duel was born.

In the 18th century, the British mercantile middle classes encroached upon many traditional aristocratic privileges, including duelling. And it is from the Georgian period – the heyday of duelling in Britain – that we derive our stereotypical image of the duellist shedding his wig and frockcoat before fighting for the honour of a lady.

During this period, the many civil and military laws classifying duelling as murder were largely ignored – there was in effect one set of rules for gentlemen and another for working men – and objections to the practice as unchristian were steadily rebuffed. In the famous dictum of a duellist in the 1749 comic novel *Tom Jones*: “I love my religion very well, but I love my honour more.”

In fact, it wasn’t until the end of the Napoleonic Wars and a widespread rejection of militarism that the campaign to abolish duelling in Britain gained momentum. Several shocking incidents – most famously the Duke of Wellington’s duel (when prime minister) with the Earl of Winchilsea over the Catholic Relief Bill in 1829 (neither was injured) – served to sour the public view of the practice.

It was a voluntary association – that oh-so-Victorian of enterprises – that did most to popularise the anti-duelling movement. The

Association for the Discouragement of Duelling won widespread public support, and, by 1844, campaigners were hailing the passage of new laws as the end of duelling in Britain.

Yet duelling persisted. Ten years after the Canterbury candidates’ confrontation, and nearly 20 years after campaigners toasted

the end of duelling in Britain, an Irish MP Daniel O’Donoghue issued a challenge to Sir Robert Peel – son of the famous statesman and duellist – after the latter accused the former of being a traitor. But it seems that Peel didn’t share his father’s love of pistols at dawn, for O’Donoghue’s challenge was never taken up.

That same spring of 1862, the nation was riveted by the case of a Captain Robertson, who was court-martialled for *failing* to fight a duel. His brother-officers were none too happy at rumours that Robertson was consorting with a ‘low’ woman, and had him forced out of his regiment for failing to confront his accuser.

Regular news of foiled duels, including one uncovered by the wife of a Bristol surgeon and directly reported to the magistrate in 1860, suggested clandestine encounters

“The nation was riveted by the case of a Captain Robertson who was **court-martialled for failing to fight a duel**”





“Advocates of duelling worried that, without it, **the younger generation would become less ‘gentlemanly’**”

*did* occur. In fact, many observers fretted that duelling was resurgent in Britain, with some insisting that heavy fines and hard labour for would-be duellists were the only way to prevent the average man from suddenly finding himself “at the mercy of any reckless fool, blackguard, and bully”.

So why would duelling not die? The answer is simply that the motivations behind the practice had not disappeared. Victorian gentlemen needed to protect their reputations and they still felt responsible for the honour of their female relations who, a few infamous ‘petticoat duels’ aside, could not enter the field.

### Dying to be polite

The alternatives to duelling were to proclaim a personal grievance in the newspapers, which might result in a libel suit, or to go directly to a court of law. Both procedures were messy, and might require a family to wash their dirty linen in public.

Frustrated by the supposed impunity with which slanderers operated, many people thought that the abolition of duelling was premature. It was not so much the duel itself that they were defending, but the effect it had upon British society. Ironically, duelling’s advocates credited it with making people more polite; they worried that, without duelling, the younger generation would become less ‘gentlemanly’.

However, this younger generation were turning the deadly practice into pranks. A Cambridge undergraduate, who had been the victim of bullying, discovered as much when he was encouraged to challenge his chief tormentor to a duel in 1864. The farce was played out most seriously until the two men had harmlessly ‘snapped a cap’ at the other, whereupon the challenger realised that he was the victim of one more practical joke.

A young officer in the 6th Inniskilling Dragoons similarly sought revenge upon his bullies through a duel in 1855. He complained that his horse, worth £80, had been deprived of its tail. His grievances did not move the old sergeant who arrested him en route to the duelling spot.

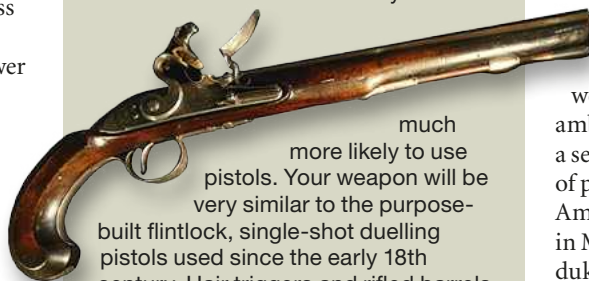
## HOW TO HAVE A VICTORIAN DUEL

### 1 Find an enemy

Common as quarrels are, finding an opponent is tricky. Challenge the wrong man and, as a Colonel Lumley discovered in 1868, he will turn the matter over to his solicitor. Instead of gaining satisfaction, you will be derided in open court as a modern day Don Quixote of dubious sanity. An aristocratic opponent, particularly one with links to the army or politics, is more reliable.

### 2 Select a weapon

If you are a skilled swordsman, or a reckless youth like the son of the American ambassador to Spain, you can elect to duel with short swords. But you are



much more likely to use pistols. Your weapon will be very similar to the purpose-built flintlock, single-shot duelling pistols used since the early 18th century. Hair triggers and rifled barrels to improve accuracy are frowned upon.

### 3 Find a friend

The difference between a duel and a brawl is procedure. As such, finding a good second is essential. He will request an apology for you and then issue a challenge. At the duel, he will measure the pre-agreed 10 to 15 paces, load your pistol and, if you are lucky, connive with the other second to load it with clay balls. But remember to bring a surgeon too.

### 4 Choose a location

The key attributes of a good duelling site are that it is flat, open, relatively unpopulated and yet accessible. England’s many grassy commons might be tempting but, as the Earl of Cardigan found out when he was arrested post-duel in Wimbledon Common in 1840 by a local miller, they are also accessible to officious Englishmen. A lonely beach in Belgium is your best bet.

### 5 Flee the scene

If your opponent is fatally wounded, you have a poor chance of escaping British law. A Lieutenant Hawkey fled from Southsea beach to France after fatally wounding his opponent in an 1845 duel, but ultimately returned to face justice rather than spend his life in exile. Otherwise, you have the option of keeping quiet – but you will be in good company if you succumb to the temptation of boasting about your brush with death.

Another challenge to the ban on duelling was that duels continued to be fought around the globe, and Victorian Britons ventured abroad in unprecedented numbers for both business and pleasure. Young men who were eager to see continental hotspots like the Mabilles in the Champs-Élysées – weekly entertainments where Parisian crowds enjoyed the illuminated fountains, 30,000 gas jet lamps and energetic bands – were cautioned about being drawn into duels by locals. Yet Britons disliked the idea of ‘their’ young men backing down if challenged by a foreigner. The Crimean War (1853–56) and Indian Mutiny (1857–58) were directly followed by several French invasion scares, which inspired many men to join the armed forces. In this environment, the martial spirit evinced by duelling suddenly had renewed appeal.

And it wasn’t only men-in-arms who were drawn to it. In 1853, the British ambassador to Spain, Lord Howden, acted as a second in a duel. The cause was not an issue of policy but the evening gown of the American ambassador’s wife. It was at a soirée in Madrid that her son overheard a French duke joke that the dress was so outmoded it might have been worn by the 15th-century duchess Mary of Burgundy. In the flurry of challenges and counter-challenges that followed, the British ambassador stood beside his American friend. That Howden was not harshly censured, despite rumours that he nearly fought the Austrian ambassador, suggests Britons disliked their representatives to appear cowardly, especially to continental competitors.

For too long, we have believed the Victorian claim that they defeated duelling by the 1840s. The image of pistols at dawn does not fit with our idea of Victorians as the first Britons to exchange romantic ideas of personal honour for the practical benefits of social order. However, the lack of an appealing alternative, coupled with aristocratic bullies and foreign temptations breathed life into the practice well into the 19th century. In fact, it took the sweeping social changes of the 20th century – bringing with them the end of aristocratic dominance and the postwar abhorrence of violence – to make duelling truly a thing of the past. **H**

**Dr Margery Masterson** is a teaching fellow at the University of Bristol, who is currently researching violence in the Victorian era

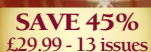
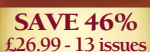
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► **A Polite Exchange of Bullets: The Duel and the English Gentleman, 1750-1850** by Stephen Banks (The Boydell Press, 2010)



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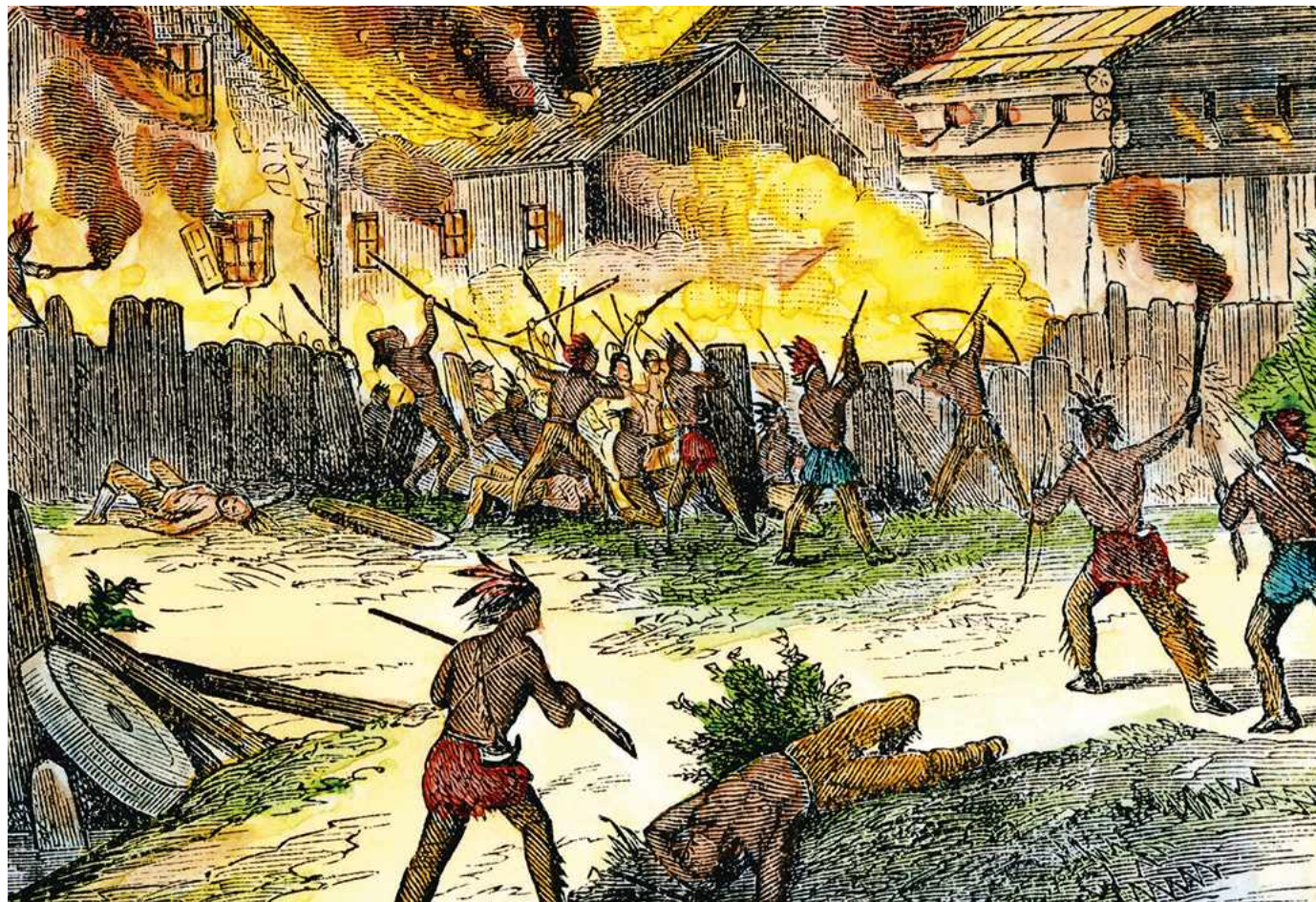
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## THE **HISTORY** ESSAY



An illustration of the burning of the English settlement of Deerfield in Massachusetts during a 1704 attack by Native Americans. It was one of a series of conflicts, spanning many decades, between various tribes and the colonists who arrived in the 17th century

# AMERICA: BRAVE NEW WORLD OR ACCIDENT?

Far from being a bold project to create a nation, early settlers to the US wanted nothing more than to survive – and to recreate England

**By Malcolm Gaskill**

ALAMY



Just before dawn on 29 February 1704, the Reverend John Williams was awoken by the sound of splintering wood and smashing glass. He was barely out of bed when 20 Native American warriors with painted faces and tomahawks appeared in his house. Williams aimed his pistol at the leading intruder, but it

misfired and he was apprehended. The raid, a joint Franco-Native Indian operation, left 56 residents of Deerfield, a small township in north-western Massachusetts, dead in the snow. Among them were two of Williams's eight children. Five of the others (one was away at school), together with Williams and his wife, were gathered into a group of more than 100 people and marched off into the freezing wastes, heading for Canada.

Fear and privation, courage and fortitude framed lives and shaped identity on the New England frontier. Queen Anne's War, a European conflict fought between France and England and transposed to North America, had been raging since 1702; it had been preceded by King William's War in the 1690s and, 20 years earlier, Metacom's War, which had threatened to wipe New England off the map.

Captives, taken by the Native Americans to be enslaved or ransomed, survived almost unbelievable ordeals. John Williams's wife was killed (for stumbling on the march), but he and his children were finally freed in November 1706 – though his 10-year-old daughter Eunice was forced to remain as the surrogate child of a Mohawk family. The following year, Williams published a book, *The Redeemed Captive*, one of numerous such accounts that made captivity a familiar trope in colonial history.

This story, and others like it, is well known. But we might ask a question that seems obvious but too often goes unasked: who were these frontiers folk, and what on Earth were they were doing there? How was their identity shaped and defined?

At one level, the answer is simple: they were English migrants, and the children and grandchildren of English migrants. Yet theirs is an amazing story. Some 350,000 English people emigrated in the 17th century, making the most lasting contribution to white culture in North America before 1700. It was no easy transition. Behind every departure lay an extraordinary tale of logistical difficulty and emotional upheaval, often ending in homesickness and hardship or premature death. Many arrived in Massachusetts in the 1630s, part of the so-called 'great migration', among them John Williams's father, aged six, whose family had momentarily decided to forsake Norwich for an uncertain existence outside Boston.

What did people expect to gain from their sacrifice? Most were fleeing political, religious and eco-

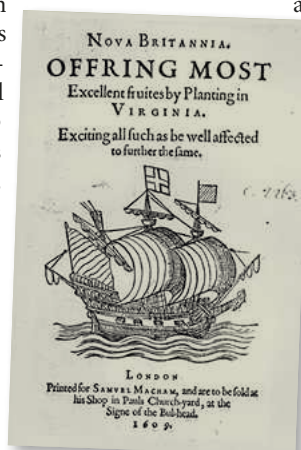
nomic problems. Many felt England had hit the skids. After the American Revolutionary War (1775–83), the Old World was painted as a redundant *ancien régime* where corrupt kings, bishops and aristocrats denied honest labourers land and rights.

If one accepts this view, it's natural to assume that migrants craved transformation. In 1782 a French settler defined the 'American' as one who "leaving behind all his ancient prejudices and manners, receives new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced". 'Exceptionalism' – the sense that America is special – has coloured modern memory, too. The 20th-century historian Daniel Boorstin encouraged the notion that, from the start, colonisation forged a unique civilisation. Colonists had turned their backs on England, a place distant in space and time that, in histories of the US at least, provided at best a sketchy backstory of little relevance and less interest.

But this is a story that needs to be told forwards from the past, not backwards from the present – and from England, then the world's most powerful country, looking towards a colonial America as yet unborn. Emigrants did not, for the most part, want to reinvent themselves: they were desperate to stay the same, and merely craved a better environment in which to defend fortune and freedom.

Many, of course, never intended to stay; many who did ended up returning home anyway. Expectations were diverse – personal and national, religious and commercial – but all colonists wanted to inspire and revitalise England, or to restore their own sense of themselves as English. Their aims were nostalgic, founded on the hope of recreating a social world that was vanishing, or recovering a better one from the past. Accordingly, the founding generations remained essentially English – indeed, they called themselves 'the English' – and they remained tied to memories of the motherland and to their relatives at home.

Colonial history, then, is prone to distortions and false perspectives. Puritans dominate the memory of New England, even though covenanted church members were the minority, and New England dominates the memory of 17th-century America even though this was the destination for only 21,000 (6 per cent) of the 350,000. Far more English migrants went to Chesapeake Bay, and most went to the West Indies. A vision of the Pilgrim Fathers disembarking from the *Mayflower* at Plymouth Rock in 1620 may be more ap-



A 1609 pamphlet proclaims the merits of life in Virginia – a desperate attempt to promote a nascent colony struggling to attract settlers



“From the start, the wilderness got the upper hand – not so much the empty, uncultivated land nor its hostile inhabitants, but the wilderness the English brought with them”

peeling than one of godless tobacco farmers or slave-owning sugar barons. Yet emphasis on the Pilgrims – not least with the annual celebration of the first Thanksgiving – is misleading. They believed they were propelled and preserved by God’s providence: new Israelites seeking Canaan in the wilderness. But they did not resemble the typical English migrant, who was probably an adolescent apprentice on an insalubrious plantation in Virginia or Barbados. And there was nothing divinely inexorable about the progress of colonies or their inhabitants.

The English were not natural colonisers. Queen Elizabeth showed little interest – at least, in terms of financial support – despite the efforts of Richard Hakluyt, whose *Discourse Concerning Western Planting* was written for her in 1584. In that year, the queen granted Sir Walter Raleigh a charter to colonise ‘Virginia’, the idea being not planting per se but rather the creation of a base from which to loot Spanish fleets. However, the experimental Roanoke Colony soon came to a sticky end. Elizabeth’s successor, James VI and I, was similarly non-committal, but peace with Spain removed the need for piratical outposts, while arguments for extracting commodities to reduce imports, and for creating colonial markets to increase exports, became more compelling.

Yet royal coffers remained closed. The Virginia Company, formed in 1606, was a consortium dependent on private investment – investment that proved hard to attract and upon which few dividends were paid. Jamestown, the first permanent settlement, became a byword for factional conflict, chaos and high mortality. Promoters spoke of “Earth’s only paradise”, but English paupers preferred to take their chances at home, and speculators looked elsewhere.

“It is a matter of great difficulty,” opined the Elizabethan historian William Camden, “by the expenses of a private man to plant a colony in far distant countries.” There was never enough money, in other words – nor enough willing migrants. “We are known too well to the world to love the smoke of our own chimneys so well,” a minister wrote, “that hopes of great advantages are not likely to draw many of us from home.” In contrast to providential or exceptionalist narratives, which somehow make the US seem inevitable, in 1600 the idea that even a single colony would survive seemed far-fetched. There was so much available land, and England had so little – but without workers it had no value.

The vexed beginnings of Jamestown taught that colonies needed not just labourers but also skilled tradesmen and political leaders. England’s social order, along with its laws and customs, had to be recreated on the other side of the Atlantic. The question was: how? The prob-

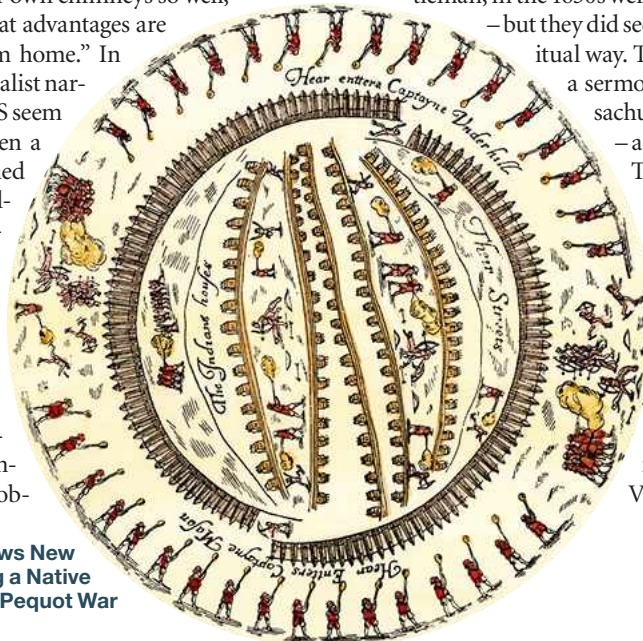
lem was compounded by scepticism that occupying foreign territory was even lawful.

In the reign of James I, pamphlets appealed to higher ideals and better natures using Roman law, classical history and biblical precept. Land was either empty – *vacuum domicilium* – or occupied by Native Americans and so ‘hitherto uncultivated’ (*hacenus inculta*). Either way, English imperialists had the right – indeed a sacred duty – to go forth. Did bees not swarm from the overflowing hive? Had the Romans not saved pagan Britain from savagery? The gospels, good Protestants knew, must be spread throughout the earth before Christ would return. If the land was perfectible as a ‘new’ England, then its peoples might yet be civilised and Christianised.

The most famous example was Pocahontas, daughter of the Powhatan chief Wahunsonacock, who in 1614 married a tobacco farmer named John Rolfe, and two years later attended the court of James I. She was an exemplar to colonial missionaries, but also a political pawn. Her death, as she prepared to return to Virginia, exacerbated deteriorating Anglo-Native American relations, culminating in the uprising of 1622 in which 347 English colonists perished. Noble aspirations did not die with them – charitable organisations funded missions throughout the 17th century – but now Englishmen felt less inhibited. Indeed, an opportunity for the guilt-free exploitation of native resources may have enhanced America’s appeal to adventurers, even as the Virginia Company fragmented and was taken over by the crown.

The Plymouth Pilgrims established a new type of colonial settlement, quite unlike the straggling tobacco farms along the James river: the communitarian godly commonwealth, independent of the Church of England. They also believed that Native Americans could be won for Christ. The migrants led by John Winthrop, a Suffolk gentleman, in the 1630s were not separatists – at least, not openly so – but they did seek to chasten England for losing its spiritual way. This was an ideal famously expressed in a sermon by Winthrop that elevated the Massachusetts Bay Colony as “a city upon a hill” – an aspirational beacon to the Old World. The company seal depicted a near-naked Native American speaking the words: “Come over and help us.”

From the start, however, the wilderness got the upper hand – not so much the empty, uncultivated land nor its hostile inhabitants, but the wilderness the English brought with them: their own religious and political differences, and the strains imposed by economic habit. By 1650, Virginia and Massachusetts had become



This 17th-century illustration shows New England’s colonial militia attacking a Native American village during the Pequot War





Pocahontas is shown being visited by her brothers in this engraving of 1619, made two years after she died in England – an event that contributed to the 1622 uprising. Daughter of Chief Wahunsonacock, she married settler John Rolfe and changed her name to Rebecca



“The idea of the ‘new American man’ beloved of future generations was totally alien. If anything, regional differences – between, say, a Londoner and a West Countryman – were accentuated”

much more like England, but with new gains came old problems: boundary disputes, protests over customary rights, subordination and insubordination, resentment at taxation (without political representation), poverty and crime. The idea of the ‘new American man’ beloved of future generations was totally alien. Far from being dissolved in the melting pot, if anything regional differences between, say, a Londoner and a West Countryman were accentuated. Sometimes they fought. Native Americans were converted, but many more died in the Pequot War of 1637 and in subsequent conflicts.

People in New England and old England felt sorry for each other, although the former had better reason to pity the latter once civil war broke out in 1642. Yet even then England managed to export its problems. Not only did hundreds of New Englanders return to fight, but the quarrels were also played out in America. Colonies attempted to appear neutral, but it was obvious that Massachusetts supported parliament and Virginia the king. There were confrontations in New Hampshire, and in 1652 Cromwell sent a fleet to Barbados to remove Lord Willoughby, who had claimed the island for the exiled Charles II. In Maryland, in 1655, the battle of the Severn saw Catholic royalists pitched against Protestant parliamentarians – arguably the last engagement of the Civil War.

The 1640s and 1650s brought protests in the name of liberty – appeals to a sense of Englishness raised above crown or parliament through vague yet potent claims to the ‘ancient constitution’. In his determination to subdue subjects abroad, Oliver Cromwell did not depart from the ways of Charles I; nor, later, did Charles II differ much from Cromwell. The ideological differences of the Civil War shifted towards more explicit conflict between colonies and crown – a crown that happened to offend Protestants in its absolutism and Catholicism, but might have been quite different in politics and religion and still caused friction in America. New England’s Puritans celebrated the Glorious Revolution of 1688–89, but the monarchy’s imperialist character was here to stay. William III and II declined to repeal the hated Navigation Acts by which levies were charged on colonial trade, nor did the charter he restored to Massachusetts have the same strident spirit as that which John Winthrop had carried there in 1630.

Dissatisfaction magnified feelings dating back to the founding of Jamestown, namely that colonists were entitled to some self-government. Typically, the focus was local interpretation of English law, not independence. Settlers justified this in that they had surrendered home comforts, risked their lives, and alone understood the problems of governance several thousand miles from Westminster. Ironically, their claims, like all claims to the rights of freeborn Englishmen, were conservative in inception yet potentially radical. Nowhere was this attitude stronger than in Boston, whose laws followed Moses, not English statute.

There money was illegally minted, regicides were kept from justice, and errant Englishmen – so petitioners complained to Charles II – assumed “the privilege of a free state”.

Had these exiled Englishmen, who clung to Englishness in the wilderness and loudly advertised English rights, somehow become ‘Americans’? They didn’t call themselves this, or if they did it was self-deprecating: they meant that cultural starvation had turned them into ‘Indians’. But there was truth in this false modesty. As New England expanded, so more colonists lived far from schools and churches, and became tough survivalists. To Puritan stalwarts in Boston, such people were ‘white Indians’. In the 1650s, a settler in Connecticut, who had been amazed to see natives converted, imagined a Judgment Day on which Native Americans were bathed in glory alongside Englishmen sunk in ‘Indian darkness’.

Less sensationally, every colonist of some years’ standing was changed – not into ‘Americans’ as such, but certainly a different kind of English person. New Englanders, at least, acquired a distinct and unsavoury character in old English eyes. In the 1690s, the journalist Ned Ward portrayed them as hypocrites in “puritanical postures”, yet fond of rum and “as subtle as serpents”.

By 1700, European America had a population of 300,000, two-fifths of New English descent. The New Englanders mocked by Ned Ward were mostly of the third generation, upon whom puritanism exerted less force than it had on their grandparents. Native Americans had been pushed to the margins of their ancestral lands – banished, diminished. If, as early explorers described, they had lived in a kind of paradise, this was their fall; songs of experience replaced songs of innocence. Robert Beverley, a Virginian planter, admitted in 1705 that Englishmen had taken everything from the Native Americans in exchange for “drunkenness and luxury... which have multiplied their wants, and put them upon desiring a thousand things they never dreamt of before”. As Eden receded, so did Canaan. America never fulfilled the utopian dreams upon which adventures were built, and worldly ideals took over.

We know of some English colonists who joined the Native Americans and were assimilated, including Joshua Tift, captured during King Philip’s War and executed as a traitor. Such complete conversions were few compared to the thousands who absorbed something of native America simply by living there. They did, however, prove the possibility of something unimaginable when Englishmen first travelled to save ‘savages’ from Satan. The most striking example of a colonist-turned-Native American was Eunice Williams, the child left in Quebec when her family was freed in 1706. Renamed Waongote, meaning ‘transplanted’, she married a Mo-



**Queen Anne's War (1702–13) saw French and Native American fighters pitted against English settlers and their native allies**

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“The germ of America’s brave new world was formed in England by people trying to solve English problems; their restless innovation grew out of English determination to resist change, not encourage it”



This coloured engraving dating from the 16th century shows English settlers arriving in Virginia. A colonist to the area later admitted that the actions of Englishmen had taken everything from the Native Americans in exchange for “drunkenness and luxury”

hawk and resisted attempts by her father, John Williams, to redeem her. She even forgot how to speak English.

All English people who went to America were the transplanted, and over time this signified strength more than dislocation, pride more than unease, a singular loyalty not a divided one. To be an American was to be self-willed, resilient, and defiant – qualities tested in 1776 and not found wanting. Earlier events acquired exceptionalist significance. The contract signed on the *Mayflower*, an Old World business agreement deferential to law and custom, became a kind of proto-constitution. And Winthrop’s “city upon a hill” lost its reactionary colour to become an emblem of valour and idealism, evoked by US presidents as different as Kennedy, Reagan and Obama. Colonists were recruited from the past as progressive libertarians, even though Winthrop equated democracy with tyranny and defined liberty as freedom to abide by his interpretation of God’s will.

It may not matter to millions of Americans that the germ of their brave new world was formed in England by people trying to solve English problems, that their restless innovation grew out of English

determination to resist change, not encourage it, nor that ‘manifest destiny’ was a self-justifying illusion concealing a less epic reality: an incoherent, faltering rag-bag of ill-conceived colonial adventures. But it should matter for the history of England because America reflected the nation’s tensions and anxieties in the 17th century, and its very English agonies of transformation. **H**

Malcolm Gaskill is professor of early modern history at the University of East Anglia and author of *Between Two Worlds: How the English Became Americans* (Oxford University Press, 2014)

#### DISCOVER MORE

##### BOOKS

► **Coming Over: Migration and Communication Between England and New England in the Seventeenth Century** by David Cressy (Cambridge University Press, 1987)

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## Magna Carta Day

**Saturday 21 March 2015, 10am–5.30pm**

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**With David Carpenter, Dan Jones, Nicholas Vincent and Louise Wilkinson**

*Listen to lectures from four eminent speakers, join in an afternoon debate where the historians will take questions from the floor, and enjoy a buffet lunch at the venue, plus morning and afternoon teas and coffees*

**Dan Jones** is a journalist and a bestselling historian. He is the author of several books about medieval England, including *The Plantagenets* and *The Hollow Crown*. His forthcoming book, *Magna Carta: The Making and Legacy of The Great Charter*, is published in December.

### Talk England in the Age of Magna Carta

The year 1215 is famous as that of Magna Carta. But it was also a year of war, siegecraft, church reform, justice, trade – and the small business of everyday life. Dan will put the Great Charter in its social context, exploring life away from Runnymede eight centuries ago.

**Louise Wilkinson** is professor of medieval history at Canterbury Christ Church University and a co-director of the Magna Carta Project. Her books include a recent biography of King John's youngest daughter, Eleanor de Montfort.

### Talk Women in the Age of Magna Carta

Louise explores what it was like to be a woman in King John's England, and casts light on the lives of remarkable ladies like Nicholaa de la Haye, who defended Lincoln Castle in the civil war over Magna Carta.

**David Carpenter** is a professor emeritus of medieval history at King's College London and an honorary professor at University College London.

### Talk Magna Carta: The Document

David will look at new research into the four surviving originals of the Magna Carta. He will also explore what the numerous 13th-century copies of the charter can add to our knowledge about the negotiations at Runnymede.

**Nicholas Vincent** is professor of medieval history at the University of East Anglia and leads the Arts and Humanities Research Council team that is investigating the context and meaning of Magna Carta.

### Talk The Legacy of Magna Carta

Nicholas will discuss the significance of Magna Carta in the centuries after 1215, with particular emphasis upon the idea of English 'liberty' and some surprising reflections on the charter's influence beyond the English-speaking world.

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## Waterloo Day

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**Jenny Uglow** has written widely about 18th- and 19th-century art, science and society. Her most recent book is *In These Times: Living in Britain Through Napoleon's Wars, 1793–1815*.

**Talk 'Inscrutable Providence': The Home Front at the End of the Wars**

In this illustrated talk Jenny explores the pressures for peace, the industrial troubles, the roller coaster of fears and hopes, delights and alarms, of ordinary people as the long conflict drew to a close.

**Andrew Lambert** is Laughton professor of naval history at King's College London. His latest book is *The Challenge: Britain Against America in the Naval War of 1812*.

**Talk Why was the Battle Fought at Waterloo? British Grand Strategy Between 1793 and 1815**

Andrew examines the strategic realities of the European conflict, with special reference to the importance of northern Flanders for the security of the UK.

**Alan Forrest** is emeritus professor of modern history at the University of York. He has published widely on modern French history, including, most recently, a biography of Napoleon in 2011.

**Talk Napoleon and His Place in History**

Napoleon made no secret of his desire to secure his place in history, yet by 1815

much of what he had built lay in ruins. This talk will examine Napoleon's reputation and explain the rise of a cult of the emperor in 19th-century France.

**Gary Sheffield** is professor of war studies at the University of Wolverhampton. His biography *Wellington* is being published in the Pocket Giants series by the History Press in 2015.

**Talk Wellington from India to Waterloo: The Making of a Military Commander**

Gary Sheffield chronicles the military career of the Duke of Wellington, tracing the evolution of his style of command from his days as a 'sepoy general' in India through the Peninsular War and Waterloo.

**Gordon Corrigan** was a regular officer of the Royal Gurkha Rifles before becoming a full-time military historian. His latest book is *Waterloo: A New History of the Battle and its Armies*.

**Talk Waterloo: The Battle for Europe**

Waterloo – a stunning British victory against overwhelming odds, or an allied victory against odds that weren't that bad? Gordon looks at the men, the armies and the battles that brought an end to the struggle against France.

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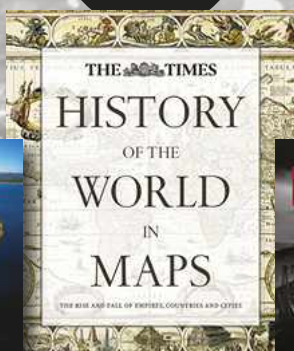
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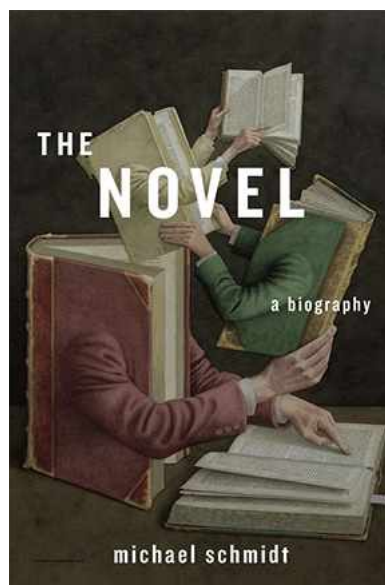
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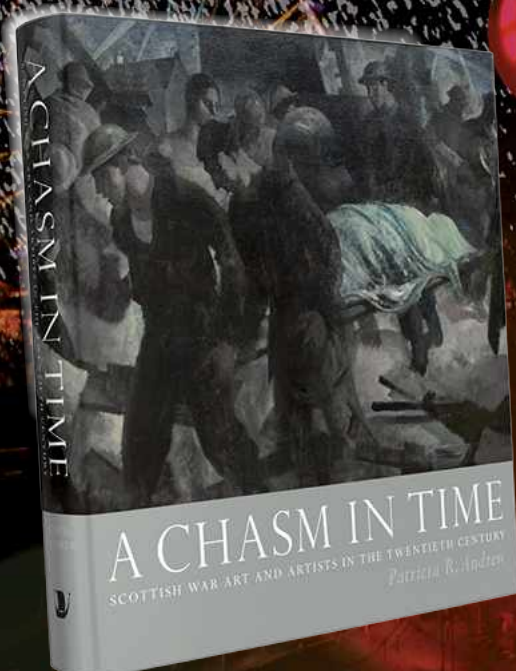
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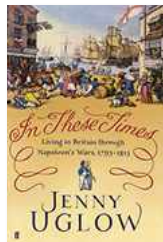


From the stories of nations to new takes on famous figures, over the next six pages our experts choose their top history books of 2014. Plus, from page 72, we look back at the year's best historical fiction and DVD releases

ILLUSTRATED BY BEN JONES



## Lucy Worsley



Many visitors will walk across the battlefield of Waterloo in 2015 thinking of those who died there 200 years before. But what about the wives, sisters, parents and employers of the dead? **Jenny Uglow's *In These***

**Times: Living in Britain Through Napoleon's Wars, 1793-1815** (Faber and Faber) tells the stories of those who stayed at home, in what she describes as a "crowd biography". Rather than straightforwardly covering the period's rapid changes in industry, banking, agriculture and taxation, she throws light on these subjects by giving us flickering glimpses of how people in Britain managed, reacted, grieved and survived. It's a brilliantly clever conceit and, with its sharply observed characters and humorous touches, it's almost as if Jane Austen wrote a history of her own times.

**Lucy Worsley** is a historian and broadcaster

**"With its sharply observed characters, it's almost as if Jane Austen wrote a history of her own times"**

## Andrew Roberts



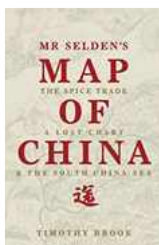
Can the fascination with that utterly loathsome über-traitor Kim Philby ever dim? Not with books as well researched and intelligent as **Ben Macintyre's *A Spy Among Friends: Kim Philby and the Great***

**Betrayal** (Bloomsbury) being published. I thought I was pretty well up on the Cambridge traitors, but Macintyre has used newly declassified intelligence files and his own entertaining insights to tell the story anew. That Philby could have wound up running British intelligence during the Cold War hardly bears contemplation, but Macintyre shows how close he came.

**Andrew Roberts** is the author of *Napoleon the Great* (Allen Lane, 2014)



## Jerry Brotton



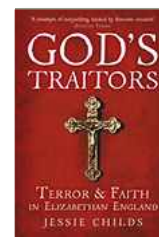
**Timothy Brook** has written a small masterpiece in **Mr Selden's Map of China: The Spice Trade, a Lost Chart and the South China Sea** (Profile). It's a book that, following on from his earlier *Vermeer's*

*Hat*, showcases his ability as one of the world's leading Ming specialists who is also capable of writing exciting and often moving popular history.

The book traces the rediscovery of an anonymous map of the China Sea, part of the collection of the English scholar John Selden. Both the map and its owner are products of the 17th century, and Brook is able to recreate their very different worlds – one Ming, the other Jacobean and Caroline – thanks to a rare combination of erudite scholarship, boundless curiosity and the belief in the need to communicate global stories in clear and compelling prose.

**Jerry Brotton** is the author of *A History of the World in 12 Maps* (Allen Lane, 2012)

## Sarah Gristwood



There's micro history and macro history – and then there's the rare book that takes a seemingly small subject and lets it lead to wider issues. Minutely researched and vividly readable, **Jessie Childs'**

**God's Traitors: Terror and Faith in Elizabethan England** (Bodley Head) follows the fortunes of the recusant Vaux family – from the clampdown on Catholics that followed the papal bull issued against Queen Elizabeth in 1570, to the aftermath of the Gunpowder Plot, which saw Anne Vaux interrogated in the Tower. The Vaux women were particularly striking characters, but so too were the Jesuit priests the family sheltered. Underneath their tales of espionage and escape, however, Childs also manages to explore big questions still relevant today: belief and politics, security versus liberty.

**Sarah Gristwood** is the author of *Blood Sisters: The Women Behind the Wars of the Roses* (Harper Collins, 2012)





Kim Philby holds a press conference after being mistakenly cleared of Soviet espionage by the Foreign Office in 1955. Ben Macintyre's book "uses newly declassified intelligence to tell Philby's story anew"

## HAVE YOUR SAY

Tell us about your favourite history title of 2014 and discover what your fellow readers think. Find out more at [historyextra.com/booksoftheyear](http://historyextra.com/booksoftheyear)



### Simon Sebag Montefiore



**Serhii Plokhy's *The Last Empire: The Final Days of the Soviet Union*** (Oneworld Publications) is superb: a deeply researched, indispensable reappraisal of the fall of the USSR that has the

nail-biting drama of a movie, the gripping narrative and colourful personalities of a novel, and the analysis and original sources of a work of scholarship. Sweeping with equal authority from the White House to the Kremlin, from Kiev to Tbilisi, this important book resets the history of the fall of the USSR, showing how it was less the result of western democratic momentum and more of internal pressures, in which Ukraine was as decisive as Russia itself.

**Simon Sebag Montefiore** is a historian and author. His next book, on the Romanovs, is set to be published in 2016

### Roger Moorhouse

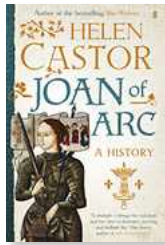


It has been a busy year for anniversaries – 100 years since the start of the First World War, 75 years since the start of the Second World War – and those two have produced some excellent history. However, it's

another anniversary publication that has caught my eye. **Mary Elise Sarotte's *The Collapse: The Accidental Opening of the Berlin Wall*** (Basic Books) explains the convoluted complex of personal and political circumstances that, 25 years ago, led to one of the most astonishing moments of modern times. Importantly, it also gives us a timely reminder of the importance of serendipity as an agent in world events. This is history writing at its very best, full of drama and pathos, yet immaculately researched and elegantly written.

**Roger Moorhouse** is the author of *The Devils' Alliance* (Bodley Head, 2014)

### David Reynolds



Choosing **Joan of Arc: A History** (Faber and Faber) might seem a bit off-piste for a historian of 20th-century international relations, but **Helen Castor's** biography is a vivid take on a figure who still divides

the English and the French as sharply as the Channel. It evokes an era in which England and France were intensely mixed up in defiance of any narrow, modern definition of 'national identity'.

More deeply, Castor makes us think about how historians use problematic sources to recreate a world in which attitudes to issues such as war, gender and the supernatural seem very different from our own. Having stripped away the layers of interpretation and speculation, we are confronted with a remarkable young woman in a man's world who remains, in Castor's words, "endlessly startling".

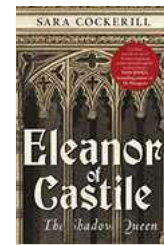
**David Reynolds'** most recent book is *The Long Shadow: The Great War and the Twentieth Century* (Simon & Schuster, 2013)

**"Plokhy's book has the nail-biting drama of a movie and the colourful personalities of a novel"**

**An effigy of Eleanor of Castile at Westminster Abbey. The queen is the subject of Sara Cockerill's new book**



### Tracy Borman



In **Eleanor of Castile: The Shadow Queen** (Amberley Publishing), **Sara Cockerill** brings one of history's most significant yet neglected queens dazzlingly to life. Eleanor of Castile, beloved wife of Edward I, fulfilled all the duties

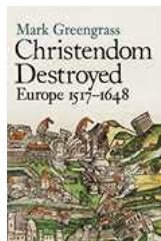
expected of a medieval queen (notably the production of heirs), but her influence extended far beyond the domestic sphere.

A powerhouse of the medieval court, Eleanor was part of her husband's innermost circle of advisers and accompanied him everywhere. Influential in architecture and design during her lifetime, she inspired the famous 'Eleanor crosses', which her grief-stricken husband commissioned to mark the stopping places of her coffin as it made its way to Westminster Abbey. Beautifully written and impeccably researched, this should grace any history lover's bookshelves.

**Tracy Borman** is the author of *Thomas Cromwell: The Untold Story of Henry VIII's Most Faithful Servant* (Hodder and Stoughton, 2014)



## Ian Kershaw



It's beyond my usual remit, but I would have to go far to beat **Mark Greengrass's *Christendom Destroyed: Europe 1517-1648*** (Allen Lane) as my book of the year. Greengrass

shows how, in the 16th and early 17th centuries, the shattering of Catholic Christendom gave way to a sense of Europe as a geographical entity.

He avoids portraying the era as 'early modern', the usual, uneasily quasi-teleological, depiction. His sensitivities and skill as a historian reveal mentalities that defy such periodisation and were so different from our own, in a world that was just opening out in new and exciting ways. Greengrass wears his immense erudition lightly, but his book is a brilliant achievement, sparking throughout with insight and originality.

**Ian Kershaw's** books include *The End: Hitler's Germany, 1944-45* (Allen Lane, 2011)

## Helen Rappaport



Having myself written books on the domestic lives of royalty, how could I not be drawn to **Janice Hadlow's** utterly engrossing ***The Strangest Family: The Private Lives of George III, Queen Charlotte***

**and the Hanoverians** (William Collins). There was no more confrontational, dysfunctional, dyspeptic family than the Hanoverians. Here is royal soap opera at its most anguished: an 18th-century psychodrama that moves from the mean-spirited to the heartbreakingly tragic.

This is a book crammed full of telling detail, as readers are drawn into a horrifying catalogue of human cruelty, especially towards children. George's attempts to right the domestic wrongs of the generations that had preceded him, only to be thwarted by clashes with his heir and the onset of madness, are deeply moving. This is narrative history at its best from an impressive new talent in the genre.

**Helen Rappaport** is the author of *Four Sisters: The Lost Lives of the Romanov Grand Duchesses* (Macmillan, 2014)

George III and his wife Charlotte leave the Treasury with sacks full of money in this 18th-century cartoon satirising their debts. Janice Hadlow's account of the family's story "is narrative history at its best"





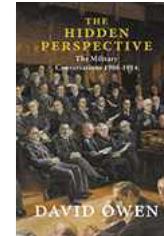


## WANT MORE ?

For more nominations, plus picks from the magazine team, visit [historyextra.com/booksoftheyear](http://historyextra.com/booksoftheyear)



### Francis Beckett



The book I devoured most eagerly this year was also the smallest: just 274 pages. But what **David Owen** has to say in **The Hidden Perspective: The Military Conversations 1906-1914** (Haus Publishing)

was as startling and disturbing as anything I've read about the First World War, even in this anniversary year.

Don't expect stylistic flourishes. This is a precise book about the profession of diplomacy, written by an experienced practitioner – a former foreign secretary and peace envoy. And what it says is that if the profession had been practised better under Sir Edward Grey, foreign secretary from 1905 until 1916, the slaughter and misery of the war, whose grim consequences shape the world even today, might well never have happened.

**Francis Beckett** is the author of several books of contemporary history

### Bettany Hughes



**Irving Finkel's The Ark Before Noah: Decoding the Story of the Flood** (Hodder and Stoughton) is a love-letter to many things: the pluck of prehistoric civilisations, the joy of scholarly discovery and

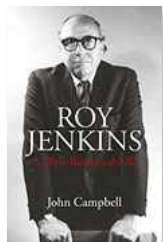
childhood holidays spent in old railway carriages. But, above all, it is a paean for the fiendishly complex system of marks known as Mesopotamian cuneiform.

Finkel is one of the few men in the world who can read cuneiform and he does so with enviable panache. Winkling out evidence from the thousands of clay tablets in his care at the British Museum – including one that instructs its reader on 'how to build an ark' – the source of the Noah legend is revealed. Finkel's book is fiercely erudite and mischievously playful: I guarantee belly laughs, as well as a window onto the early Bronze Age and an exploration of the ways in which myth and history play with one another.

**Bettany Hughes** is currently writing a new history of Istanbul



## Gary Sheffield



Roy Jenkins was one of the most important British politicians of the second half of the 20th century never to become prime minister. A socially reforming home secretary, as co-founder of the Social Democratic

Party he paved the way for New Labour.

In the very impressive **Roy Jenkins: A Well-Rounded Life** (Jonathan Cape), **John Campbell** brilliantly handles the political life of this 'big beast'. Avowedly an admirer of Jenkins, Campbell is far from uncritical. He treats his personal life – affairs and all – with sensitivity, and makes some shrewd comments about Jenkins' work as a historian. This book is a triumph and a must for anyone who wants to understand the turbulent politics of late 20th-century Britain.

**Gary Sheffield's** most recent book is *A Short History of the First World War* (OneWorld Publications, 2014)

**“Campbell’s book is a must for anyone who wants to understand 20th-century politics”**



**An Egyptian mummy in the British Museum. Joyce Tyldesley praises a book that “introduces eight very different individuals” beneath the bandages**

## Kwasi Kwarteng



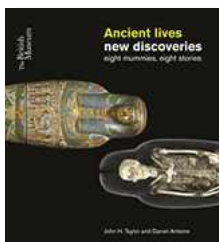
**The Summit: The Biggest Battle of the Second World War – Fought Behind Closed Doors** by **Ed Conway** (Little, Brown) is an excellent account of the Bretton Woods conference that took place in 1944 –

and which, for 25 years, determined the rules of the international economy.

Conway superbly describes the political rivalries. Delegates from 44 countries mingled in a faded New Hampshire hotel, a strange mix of economists, businessmen and oddballs. Attendees drank so much that Britain's chief negotiator, John Maynard Keynes, thought “acute alcohol poisoning would set in before the end”. Entertaining and informative, Conway's book mixes high partying with big thinking about serious matters.

**Kwasi Kwarteng** is the author of *War and Gold: A Five Hundred-Year History of Empires, Adventures and Debt* (Bloomsbury, 2014)

## Joyce Tyldesley



The Egyptians believed that they could live after death if they preserved their bodies in a life-like form, and the mummy was the practical response to this

theology. Two thousand years after the end of the dynastic age, the mummies in our museums are both long-dead people deserving of our respect and information bundles whose tissues hold the key to family histories, traumas and diseases.

**John H Taylor and Daniel Antoine's Ancient Lives, New Discoveries: Eight Mummies, Eight Stories** (British Museum Press) is a beautifully illustrated book that effortlessly combines scientific techniques and traditional Egyptology to analyse eight mummies and, in so doing, introduce eight very different individuals. Written to accompany an exhibition, it nonetheless stands alone as an excellent guide to life and death beside the Nile.

**Joyce Tyldesley** is an archaeologist, Egyptologist and author



National Service recruits march away in their new uniforms in 1953. Richard Vinen's account of British conscription is “amusing, upsetting and provocative”

## Dominic Sandbrook



**Robert Tombs' The English and Their History** (Allen Lane), his account of the English from Alfred and Æthelstan to David Cameron and Ed Miliband, is a miracle of compression, synthesis, analysis and

opinion. In an age of excessive academic specialisation, it takes great courage for anyone – let alone an expert on 19th-century France – to attempt something so ambitious. But this book is a triumph: clever and punchy, with a tremendous narrative sweep and a refreshing eagerness to offer decisive judgments.

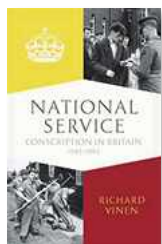
Tombs shows not just what has made England distinctive, but how its history has been reinterpreted over the centuries, from the Victorians' Whiggish optimism to the declinism of the post-Second World War generation. It has been an excellent year for history books – but this, I think, is one that will last.

**Dominic Sandbrook** is a historian and columnist





## Richard Davenport-Hines



### Richard Vinen's **National Service: Conscription in Britain, 1945-1963**

(Allen Lane) is a book written by a historian at the acme of his powers. It describes the experiences of the youngsters

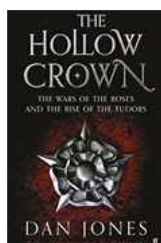
conscripted into the peacetime armed forces, mainly under the provisions of the Labour government's 1947 National Service Act. The process militarised society, doctrinating some men into life-long subordination and making rebels of others.

Vinen's account is amusing, upsetting, and provocative. With his descriptions of adolescents facing hardship, accounts of colonialism, national pride and personal heroism, and analysis of class tensions and the nature of manhood, Vinen provides resounding lessons in humanity.

**Richard Davenport-Hines** is the author of *Universal Man: The Seven Lives of John Maynard Keynes*, set to be published in March 2015 by William Collins

ALAMY

## Suzannah Lipscomb



### **The Hollow Crown: The Wars of the Roses and the Rise of the Tudors**

by **Dan Jones** (Faber and Faber) rewrites the tortuous history of 15th-century England with extraordinary

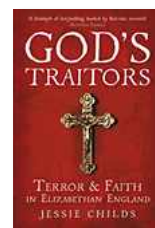
verve and compelling readability. Jones is a wonderful storyteller, who can create an intensely visual impression with an arresting turn of phrase and deliver telling details with comic wryness. Yet, his prose also quietly bristles with research and his endnotes give away the tangled jungle of historiography through which he has hacked an elegant path.

*The Hollow Crown* not only posits a fresh new argument for the story and temporal framework of the Wars of the Roses, but also sets a new bar for narrative history. This is popular history at its most brilliant, both scholarly and riveting.

**Suzannah Lipscomb** is a historian, author and broadcaster



## Chris Skidmore



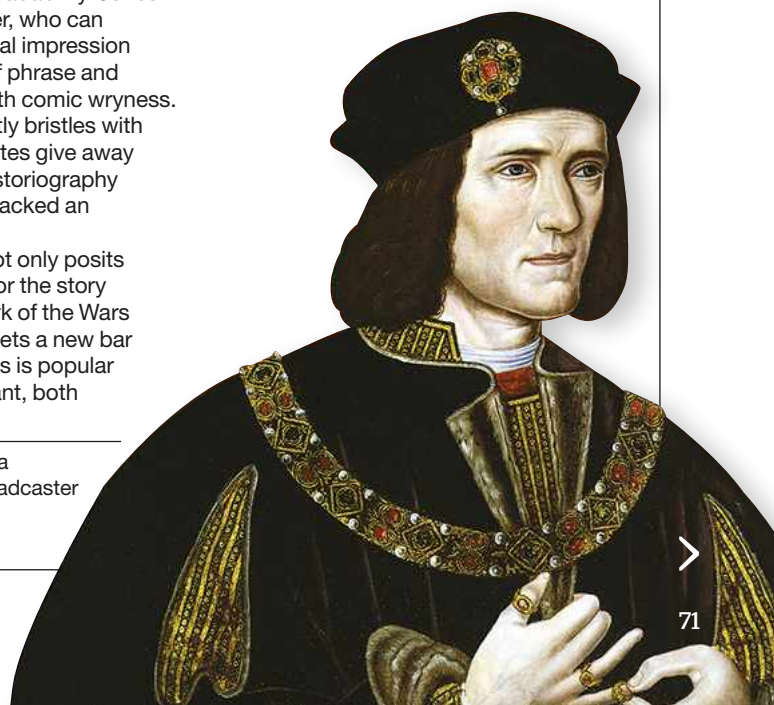
I'm always in awe of historians who eschew the expected demands of having to churn out a new book every other year in order to spend more time on good quality research and writing. It's been eight

years since **Jessie Childs'** last book, and her latest, **God's Traitors: Terror and Faith in Elizabethan England** (Bodley Head), was worth the wait. A clever refashioning of the story leading up to the Gunpowder Plot, told through the actions of the Vaux family, the work demonstrates what can be done with sources to present new perspectives.

**Chris Skidmore** is the author of *Bosworth: The Birth of the Tudors* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2013)

**"It's been eight years since Jessie Childs' last book, and her latest was worth the wait"**

Richard III as depicted in a 16th-century portrait. Dan Jones's "intensely visual" book explores the fall of the Plantagenets and the rise of the Tudors





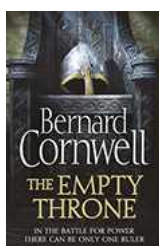
The 1789 storming of the Bastille, as depicted in an 18th-century painting. The French Revolution forms the backdrop to Andrew Taylor's "gripping" novel



# Evoking the past

**NICK RENNISON** looks back at a vintage year for historical fiction, marked both by striking works from long-established authors and impressive debuts from new novelists

Anyone looking for proof that novels set in the past remain extraordinarily popular with a wide range of readers need look no further than Amazon. In the past three months alone, nearly 5,000 new books have been categorised on its site as 'historical fiction'. Many will be reprints and paperbacks of previously published novels but, even once these have been excluded from the classification, that's still a huge number of titles for one quarter of the year. Multiply by four and it's clear that 2014 has,



like previous years, seen a flood of new historical fiction published. Some of the best have been by long-established and well-known writers. Nobody writes military historical fiction quite like **Bernard Cornwell** and, in recent years, nobody has brought the Anglo-Saxon period to life with the same skill that he has. **The Empty Throne** (HarperCollins) is the



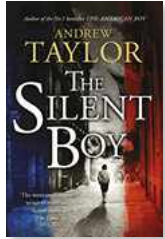
eighth book in his series about the warrior Uhtred of Bebbanburg, here plunged into the bloody rivalry for the throne of Mercia that follows the death of Æthelred. It has all the vigour and vitality of its predecessors. **Philippa Gregory** is another writer supremely at home in a period of English history she has made her own. She brought





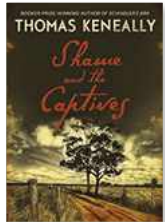
her sequence of novels about the women of the Plantagenet dynasty to a fine conclusion with **The King's Curse** (Simon and Schuster), focusing on Margaret Pole, the last Plantagenet heiress, as she struggles to live her life amid the dangers of Henry VIII's court.

**The Silent Boy** (HarperCollins) is the latest novel by **Andrew Taylor**, three times



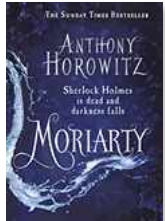
winner of the Crime Writers' Association's 'Historical Dagger' award. Its story of a young boy rendered mute by witnessing the murder of his mother in Paris during the French Revolution combines a gripping plot

with sophisticated characterisation. When the silent boy Charles is brought to England as an émigré and eventually goes missing, the search for him slowly reveals the truth about what he has seen. Veteran Australian novelist **Thomas Keneally**, author of



*Schindler's List*, meanwhile, published his most compelling novel in a decade in **Shame and the Captives** (Sceptre). Keneally takes the real-life events of the so-called

Cowra breakout in 1944, when more than 1,000 Japanese PoWs escaped from a camp in New South Wales, and turns them into a satisfying and original work of fiction. And **Anthony Horowitz**, who published a new Sherlock Holmes novel in 2011 (*The House of Silk*), ventured once more into Victorian London with **Moriarty**



(Orion). His second excursion into the 19th-century city, this time Sherlock-free, is narrated by Frederick Chase, an American Pinkerton agent who has

crossed the Atlantic in pursuit of a criminal mastermind. His quarry was intent on forging an alliance with Holmes's nemesis, Professor Moriarty, before the great detective and the 'Napoleon of Crime' plummeted over the Reichenbach Falls to their apparent deaths. *Moriarty* is a cunningly contrived story that takes readers through many twists and turns.

However, it wasn't just the older guard whose books deserved attention in 2014.

Some of the most interesting titles of the year were by debut novelists. Jessie Burton's

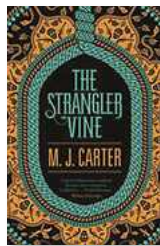


### **The Miniaturist**

(Picador) is the story of young bride Nella Oortman arriving in 17th-century Amsterdam from the countryside to begin her married life and finding that nothing is as she expects it to be. Forced

to face revelations about her new husband's sexuality and the consequences that follow, Nella finds her life uncannily reflected in the creations of a craftsman in miniature who provides furniture and fittings for the cabinet-sized doll's house she's been given as a wedding present.

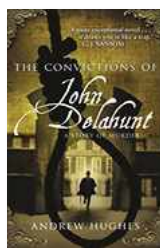
Burton regularly undermines our expectations of how her story will progress



– as does **MJ Carter** in her first novel **The Strangler Vine** (Fig Tree), a clever combination of old-fashioned ripping yarn and reinterpretation of the history of British India. Set two decades before the Indian

Rebellion of 1857, it's narrated largely by William Avery, an inexperienced junior officer in the army of the East India Company, who is despatched by his superiors to look for a man who has gone missing while investigating the Thuggee, murderous worshippers of the goddess Kali. Accompanied by Jeremiah Blake, a former company man gone native, Avery finds that the reality of India does not often match the romantic picture created in his imagination.

Nineteenth-century Dublin seems equally unromantic in **Andrew Hughes's The Convictions of John Delahunt** (Double-



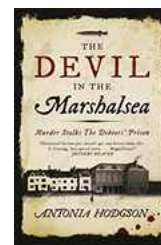
day), an exceptionally powerful portrait of a young man sinking ever further into amorality and violence after being recruited to spy on his fellow citizens by a sinister agent of the government. Delahunt ends

his days in jail, and a London debtors' prison is the setting for **The Devil in the Marshalsea** (Hodder) by **Antonia Hodgson**. In this elaborately constructed



A 1530s portrait of a woman long thought to be Margaret Pole, the subject of Philippa Gregory's novel *The King's Curse*

crime story, feckless Tom Hawkins is forced to investigate a murder within the notorious

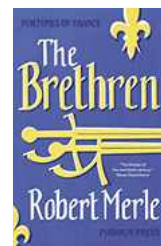


London jail as a means of winning his freedom. He soon finds his own life is at risk.

And, finally, **Robert Merle's The Brethren**

(Pushkin Press) could have been mistaken for a debut. Certainly it was

appearing for the first time in English but, in France, its author, who died a decade ago at the age of 95, was long considered the



20th-century equivalent of Alexandre Dumas. The first in an epic sequence of novels set in 16th-century France, *The Brethren* follows the fortunes of two military veterans, converts to the new religion of

Protestantism, who come into conflict with their Catholic neighbours as the country descends into civil war.

Future volumes in the saga, once translated, will be well worth reading – and may be appearing in round-ups of the year's best historical novels for the next decade. **E**

**Nick Rennison** is the author of *Carver's Quest* (Corvus, 2013). He regularly reviews historical fiction in the pages of this magazine



## DVD HIGHLIGHTS 2014

## JONATHAN WRIGHT

on some of the year's  
top DVD releases

### Who Do You Think You Are? Series 11

(RLJ Entertainment, £17.75, Cert: E)



The format of celebrities tracing their ancestry may be simple, but it's undeniably popular with viewers. This

year, the UK version of *WDY-TYA?* reached 100 episodes in the company of model Twiggy, who heard tales of how her Victorian kin struggled to get by in London. This is just one of the 10 episodes included in a three-disc set, which also finds Brian Blessed booming (what else?) his approval when he finds a family tale of "guts and courage and imagination".

### Nazi Megastructures

(National Geographic, £14, Cert: E)



As far as Hitler and his cronies were concerned, bigger was better when it came to military engineering projects. It's

therefore hugely ironic that so much of what the Nazis built failed to endure. Nonetheless, as this series demonstrates, the remains of big buildings and big machines can be found if you know where to look. The first of six parts deals with the



Twiggy is one of the stars tracing their ancestry in the latest series of *Who Do You Think You Are?*



Chiwetel Ejiofor gives an "extraordinary performance" as Solomon Northup in *12 Years a Slave*, Steve McQueen's adaptation of Northup's 1853 memoir. The film won three Oscars and is now out on DVD

Atlantic Wall, the formidable system of coastal fortifications that once stretched from France to the north of Norway. Subsequent episodes cover such subjects as V2 rocket bases and defences designed to protect Berlin.

### World War One: The Centenary Collection

(2entertain, £24.99, Cert: 15)



If it has sometimes seemed as if the BBC's output has been dominated by programmes about the First

World War in recent months, there's a simple reason. In the words of Tony Hall, the corporation's director-general: "No other event in our history has had such a dramatic impact on who we are."

Not that we're grumbling. In committing so many resources to marking the centenary over the coming years, the BBC has – even at this early stage – shown the conflict from multiple angles, as this boxset attests.

Highlights include *Royal Cousins at War*, which explores

how the sometimes troubled relationship between Nicholas II, Wilhelm II and George V shaped the conflict; *Churchill's First World War*, which charts Winston's humiliation over the Dardanelles disaster and his personal redemption as an officer on the western front; and *The World's War*, in which David Olusoga tells the stories of troops around the globe.

One grumble might be that Niall Ferguson's *The Pity of War*, which argues that Britain's decision to enter the fight was a mistake, isn't balanced by Max Hastings' *The Necessary War*. Nonetheless, this superb nine-disc collection is great value.

### Still the Enemy Within

(Lace Digital Media Sales, £14.99, Cert: 15)



Thirty years on, the bitter miners' strike of 1984–85 is being reappraised. Once it was widely portrayed as the story of how vain firebrand Arthur Scargill, a man without a legitimate mandate, led his members to inevitable defeat.

Today, it appears that the story is a bit more complicated. Owen Gower's documentary offers a raw and moving portrait of the dispute by showing events from the perspective of those who manned the picket lines.

### 12 Years a Slave

(Entertainment One, £7, Cert: 15)



It was in 2009 that film director Steve McQueen's partner, Dutch cultural critic Bianca Stigter, first came across

Solomon Northup's 1853 memoir, *Twelve Years a Slave*. Reading a work known to historians but not to the public, she knew immediately she'd found the book that McQueen, who wanted to make a drama with a slave as its central character, had been searching for. A little over four years later, this righteously angry drama of real visual flair and extraordinary performances – notably from Chiwetel Ejiofor as Northup, a man kidnapped by slave traders – won Best Picture at the Academy Awards.





Frank Skinner will be considering history's oddest moments on Radio 4

Jonathan Wright previews the pick of upcoming programmes

# TV & RADIO



## Frank discussion

### The Rest Is History

**RADIO** Radio 4,  
Sunday 14 December

Frank Skinner says he loves history, but he doesn't really know that much about it. What to do? His answer is a show that finds celebrity guests picking over some of the strangest and funniest moments from the past.

As these guests include David Baddiel, John Lloyd and David Mitchell, you'd guess this should result in plenty of laughs. And, ensuring at least some academic rigour amid the gags, Dr Kate Williams acts as the show's historian in residence.



Life is changing for the Poplar midwives this Christmas

## Christmas specials

### Call the Midwife

**TV** BBC One,  
December

It's the Yuletide, which can only mean the Poplar midwives are back for a one-off special. As we went to press, information was sketchy, but following the departure of actor Jessica Raine, who played nurse Jenny Lee, there certainly look to be changes ahead.

Also competing for Christmas ratings, there will be a one-off episode of *Downton Abbey*. Again, it's difficult to know precisely what Julian Fellowes might have planned for us, but it seems likely that Tom Branson (who married the late Lady Sybil) might be heading off to the USA.

Both shows have been recommissioned, so expect new series ahead.

## Game on...

*A new documentary tells the story of how darts went from the pub to prime time in the 1970s and 80s...*

### Timeshift: Bullseyes and Beer - When Darts Hit Britain

**TV** BBC Four, scheduled for December

**F**or Matthew Thomas, director of a new documentary focusing on the years when darts hit the big time, one match above all others stands for this transition, the 1980 Embassy World Darts Championship final. Played in a raucous, passionate atmosphere, it saw Eric 'The Crafty Cockney' Bristow beat Bobby 'Dazzler' George in a game still regarded as a classic.

"Essentially, in these guys you've got the skill and the spectacle which define the modern game," says Thomas. "You hadn't heard the crowd getting behind players like that before, and players hadn't dressed like that before - they'd worn jackets and flat caps before then."

It's a transition captured gloriously in *Bullseyes and Beer*, which features interviews with top players, including Bristow, George and John Lowe; and novelist Martin Amis, who made darts central to his 1989 novel *London Fields*.

The documentary also acknowledges the role played by BBC Sport producer Nick Hunter in darts' relentless rise. He

was one of the driving forces behind getting the World Darts Championship televised, and it was his team who introduced split-screen technology, enabling viewers to see board and player at the same time.

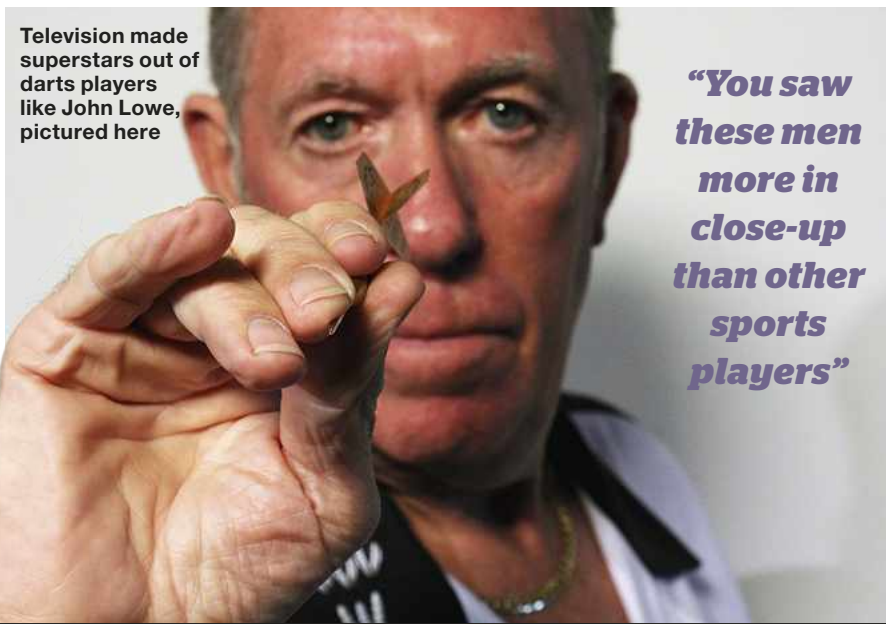
"You suddenly saw these players far more in close-up than you saw other sports players, then and now," says Thomas. "That's why they became such well-known characters."

A major theme in the documentary is whether we should see darts as a game or a true sport. "It's a very easy game to mock and I think the *Not the 9 O'Clock News* sketch [in which Mel Smith and Griff Rhys Jones down booze rather than throw darts - '140 milligrams!'] set it back. There's still that caricatured version of it that people hold in their heads."

Although certainly not Martin Amis. "I think he's remained fascinated by the game," says Thomas, whose documentary records Amis's advice to Johnny Depp when the actor prepared for a forthcoming movie version of *London Fields*: "Hang out with Bobby George... he'll give you everything you need to know." **II**



Television made superstars out of darts players like John Lowe, pictured here



**"You saw these men more in close-up than other sports players"**





Bettany Hughes contemplates how ideas have been shaped by history

## Body and soul

### The Ideas That Make Us

**RADIO** Radio 4,  
Monday 15 December

**B**ettany Hughes returns with a third series of the show where she explores ideas rooted in ancient Greece. This time around Hughes considers psyche, charisma, irony, nemesis and virtue over five weekday episodes. While each of them may be summed up by a single word, these are notions that have complex histories, as Hughes demonstrates by looking both at how these ideas have been shaped by history and how they have in turn shaped us.

Psyche, for instance, derives from the verb 'psukho' or 'I blow', just one of a number of ancient words that connect

the flow of air, breathing, with the soul. Charming, 'psukho' is also the Greek word for butterfly.

The programme begins with Homer's assertion that body and soul are the same, and looks at how this is challenged as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle begin to see the soul as both separate from the body – and in need of nurturing. This idea is also important within Christianity, and a cause of much angst for humanity when you consider how all this plays into the notion of damnation.

The series features an impressive list of contributors, as Hughes talks with, among others, philosopher Angie Hobbs, neuroscientist Patrick Haggard, novelist Ben Okri, comedian Robert Newman, *Today* host John Humphrys, historian Stella Tillyard and classicist Paul Cartledge.

## Building big

### Castles: Britain's Fortified History

**TV** BBC Four,  
Thursday 4 December

We Britons have long romanticised castles. Curious, when you consider they were once a hated symbol of Norman oppression, introduced to the country with the victory of William the Conqueror over Harold. This story is just one of the tales explored by Dr Sam Willis in a three-part series tracing the history of Britain's castles, plus their recurring role in the country's art and literature.

These Norman castles, Willis also discovers, were something of a mixed blessing. While they helped to quell a rebellious population, they also provided

bases for warrior-barons intent on challenging the crown.

For the second episode, the focus is on Plantagenet ruler Edward I, who used castles to help subdue Wales by constructing a ring of fortifications. In the third show, Willis explores how the role of castles changed in the Tudor era, when they morphed into palaces designed to impress.

**Turn to page 32 to read our feature**  
*How to Build a Castle*



Castles were once hated symbols of oppression

## WANT MORE?

We'll send news of the best history shows direct to your inbox every Friday. Sign up now at [historyextra.com/newsletter](http://historyextra.com/newsletter)



Luke Evans plays Bruce Reynolds in *A Robber's Tale*

Just a matter of weeks after Britain handed Camp Bastion over to Afghan forces, **Our War: Goodbye Afghanistan** (BBC Three, December) tells the story of the Afghan conflict from the viewpoint of those who fought, using footage from soldiers' cameras.

On Yesterday, an older conflict is remembered with the channel premiere of **Unearthed WWI** (Tuesday 9 December), in which military historian David O'Keefe and filmmaker Wayne Abbott look back at key battles by searching for surviving evidence of what occurred. Also on UKTV, the Drama channel is repeating a number of historical dramas, including **The Great Train Robbery** (Saturday 20 December) and **The Whale** (Christmas Day), the story of the whaling ship that inspired Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*.

For those with satellite, **The Disappearance of Glenn Miller** (PBS America, Monday 8 December) asks what happened on the day the band leader's plane went missing in 1944. **Race for the Superbomb** (PBS America, Tuesday 9 December) revisits efforts to develop the hydrogen bomb. **Texas Servant Girl Murders** (PBS America, Monday 15 December) tells the story of a gruesome string of killings that took place in Austin in 1885.

And on the subject of grisly crimes, season three of **Ripper Street** is now available to view via Amazon Prime. The drama will be shown via the BBC next year.





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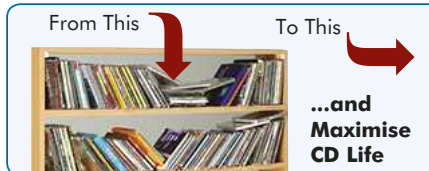
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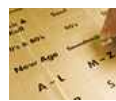
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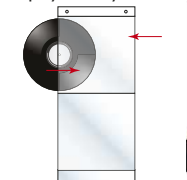
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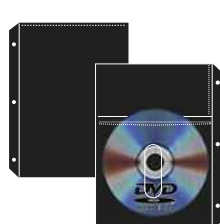
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# OUT & ABOUT

## HISTORY EXPLORER

# Life in the Bronze Age

Dr Francis Pryor and Charlotte Hodgman visit **Flag Fen** in Peterborough, a Bronze Age site that offers a unique insight into life in the Fens 3,500 years ago

The drive from Peterborough Station to Flag Fen involves a journey across former marshland, drained centuries ago and now covered with industrial buildings. But beneath the modern factories lie the remains of prehistoric settlements, says archaeologist Francis Pryor as he throws his battered Land Rover into gear.

Formerly an expert on Channel 4's *Time Team* – now a sheep farmer and author – Pryor has excavated much of Peterborough in his 40-year career. He is perhaps best known for his discovery of Flag Fen – a 3,500-year-old site comprising more than 60,000 vertical posts and 250,000 horizontal timbers that once formed a near 1km-long wooden causeway across the fens.

The site is the only place in the world where original Bronze Age timbers can be seen in their original location. And entering the darkened Preservation Hall you get a sense of just how truly remarkable the discovery is. Water drips constantly onto the Bronze Age posts and timbers that date to c1200-1100 BC – it is the waterlogged peat that has preserved the site for so long. The seemingly haphazard arrangement of the wood below the viewing platform hides a much more organised history.

“It’s difficult to imagine now, but the wood we see here once formed part of a huge walkway with a central

platform,” says Pryor. “The sand and gravel still visible on the surface isn’t there by chance – it was put there deliberately, probably to stop the wood becoming slippery in wet weather. This was clearly somewhere people visited regularly and, judging from the wealth of artefacts discovered during excavations, it had real spiritual significance. I believe it would have been the Bronze Age equivalent of a parish church, or even a cathedral, where people came to make offerings to the water.”

### Changing beliefs

The period around 1500 BC (the middle-late Bronze Age) saw a new set of religious beliefs come into play, says Pryor, with huge centralised structures like Stonehenge abandoned in favour of localised religious sites like Flag Fen. Here, men, women and children would mark rites of passage – births, marriages, the completion of apprenticeships – with symbolic offerings.

“Flag Fen wasn’t a burial site, but it would have marked the passage to the next world,” says Pryor. “Mirrors didn’t exist until c500 BC so the only way people knew what they looked like was by looking at their reflection

in still water. It must have been very powerful: water was a symbol of the self but also, beneath the surface, a symbol of death.

“One thing we *do* know about Bronze Age people is that they held their ceremonies at liminal zones, those at the boundaries. Flag Fen is liminal – you couldn’t have



An artificial lake covers, and protects, the remains of Flag Fen’s ceremonial platform



RAFAL MARCINKIEWICZ



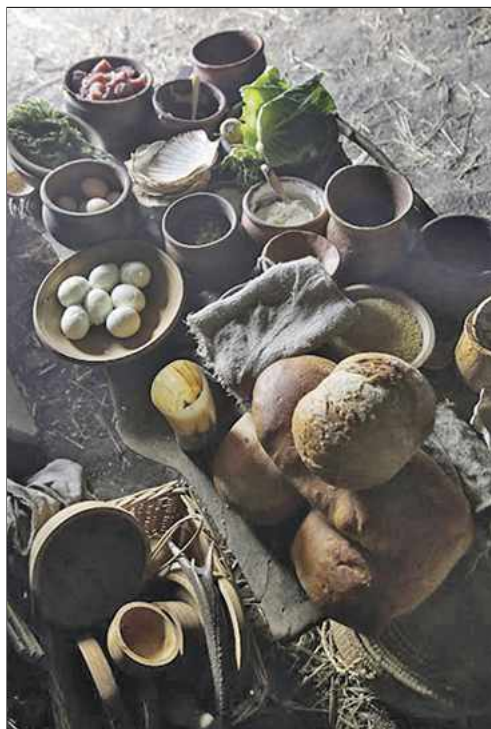
# “It’s time to re-educate people about what life in the Bronze Age was *really* like”

DR FRANCIS PRYOR

The reconstructed Bronze Age round-house at Flag Fen, complete with its insulating turfed and thatched roof







**The Bronze Age diet was both healthy and tasty, according to Francis Pryor**

lived out here. It's a watery wilderness in many respects."

Some of the artefacts discovered during excavation of the site are displayed in glass cases located outside the Preservation Hall. These give a fascinating, and often surprising, insight into the apparent sophistication of Bronze Age life.

A set of worker's tools (looking remarkably like a modern socket set), a quern stone for grinding corn and even a flesh hook (used for pulling joints of meat out of cauldrons) are all on show. Analysis of one piece of domestic pottery, a small bowl, apparently revealed evidence of a milky porridge. What is also apparent, from the pieces on display, is that almost all the items were intentionally broken or damaged before being cast into the water.

"And there is even evidence of Bronze Age trade, although not in the sense that we would understand it today," says Pryor. "We found items made of tin mined in central Europe: tin that was probably exchanged among the more powerful members of Bronze Age society for other items – perhaps on the marriage of a family member, for example. Coins don't turn up for another 1,000 years or so, but this was still trade of sorts."

Outside the chamber building, a small flock of sheep wanders the site. These are

Soay sheep, a hardy breed that would have been bred in the Bronze Age, as bones uncovered at Flag Fen have revealed.

The dyke where Pryor first discovered the site, in 1982 – quite literally stumbling upon it when he tripped over a piece of what he quickly recognised as Bronze Age timber – is still visible. And on the other side of the narrow bridge spanning the dyke is a reconstructed Bronze Age house. The roof of the circular dwelling is both thatched and turfed, as was the tradition 3,500 years ago – the turf insulating the house against the cold. Inside, the building is dark, with no windows, but the space is larger than might be expected.

"Thanks to excavations of Bronze Age settlements, we know now that the organisation of these houses followed the rotation of the sun," says Pryor. "Doorways faced south, with food prepared around a central hearth. The most important member of the household would have sat opposite the doorway, on the north side of the house – in the Bronze Age, this would probably have been the grandmother."

"People would have slept on the north and east sides of the house. Interestingly, when we have found Iron or Bronze Age burials, the bodies are always found on the north or east of the burial chamber – the side of sleep and darkness."

The remains of a Bronze Age eel trap is displayed outside the Preservation Hall – hams, sturgeon, and eels would have hung from the roof, smoking above the fire. The Bronze Age diet, it seems, was a healthy one, and tasty to boot, according to Pryor.

## Farming the land

The reconstructed roundhouse – based on one excavated in Peterborough by Pryor in the 1970s – gives a real sense of life 3,500 years ago, but the nearest settlement to Flag Fen was in fact about 800m west of the site.

Houses weren't built near one another until the Iron Age, says Pryor, and in the Bronze Age, houses tended to be carefully spread out among the fields. "By 1500 BC," he continues, "we're seeing a landscape that

## VISIT

### Flag Fen



The Droveaway, Northey Road, Peterborough PE6 7QJ  
[vivacity-peterborough.com/museums-and-heritage/flag-fen](http://vivacity-peterborough.com/museums-and-heritage/flag-fen)

was fully developed, with a network of roads covering Britain and rivers that were being navigated. In 2013, at Must Farm, two miles east of Flag Fen, a length of the river Nene was excavated. In just a 250m section, eight Bronze Age boats were found, presumably abandoned. Rivers must have been the Bronze Age equivalent of motorways: they would have been packed with people.

"The traditional idea of this period of history being one of subsistence agriculture – a family with a few dozen sheep and a couple of moth-eaten old cattle – is old hat. Farming was already intensive. We've found whole field systems, as well as yards where sheep would have been handled. As a sheep farmer I know that such areas were intended to handle hundreds, not handfuls, of sheep. These weren't people scratching a living; they were prosperous, civilised people."

**Flag Fen is home to a small flock of Soay sheep, a breed thought to have descended from those that once grazed in Bronze Age Britain**



**"FARMING WAS INTENSIVE. THESE WEREN'T PEOPLE SCRATCHING A LIVING; THEY WERE PROSPEROUS, CIVILISED PEOPLE"**



## BRONZE AGE LIFE: FIVE MORE PLACES TO EXPLORE



The incredibly well-preserved timbers at Flag Fen are around 3,500 years old

But the Bronze Age was about more than farming and surviving, according to Pryor. People led remarkably rich lives with plenty of time for leisure and spiritual activity. They even, it seems, enjoyed a tipple.

"I believe people began drinking alcohol as early as 2500 BC," says Pryor. "After all, fermentation is a pretty basic process – it

happens all the time. If you're a farmer growing wheat and barley and your storage pit gets wet, pretty soon you're going to get a beer of sorts.

"What's more, in around 2500 BC we start to see evidence of an extraordinary type of pottery, all over Europe – highly decorated mugs known as beakers. The average beaker holds around two pints and its decoration may well have signified one's family. These are not the sort of drinking vessels you'd use for a mug of river water!"

Other decorative items have been found during excavations at Flag Fen, including fragments of a bronze shield. But one of the most remarkable finds is a set of shears in a wooden box, dating to c600 BC – to shear sheep, one might assume, but Pryor has another theory.

"Bronze Age sheep like the ones we have here at Flag Fen wouldn't have needed shearing – they shed their wool naturally. Which means the shears we found were probably used for trimming beards and clipping hair – for looking nice. Caring about one's personal appearance is not something many people would attribute to Bronze Age society, but I would argue that it formed part of everyday life."

An excited group of primary school children clad in 'Bronze Age' woollen capes borrowed from the visitor centre reminds us that Bronze Age history is now part of the National Curriculum – something Pryor campaigned passionately for. But the future of Flag Fen is far less certain: the site is under constant threat of drying out. Less than 10 per cent of the site has been dug, with an artificial lake created over the largest portion of the ceremonial platform, preserving the Bronze Age timbers, and the site's history, for future generations.

"It's time to re-educate people about what life in the Bronze Age was *really* like," says Pryor, "and dispel the age-old image of wool-clad people huddling around fires in mud and rain, like cavemen. It was a period of great domestic and spiritual change. Civilised life in Britain did not begin with the Roman occupation of AD 43". ■



Words: Charlotte Hodgman.  
Historical advisor: Francis Pryor,  
author of *Home: A Time Traveller's Tales from Britain's Prehistory* (Allen Lane, 2014)

### 1 Dover Museum, Kent

Where a prehistoric boat is displayed  
In 1992, a Bronze Age boat was discovered during construction of the A20 between Folkestone and Dover. Thought to be around 3,500 years old, the vessel once carried cargos of supplies, livestock and passengers across the Channel, and is tangible evidence of Bronze Age trading. A 9.5m section of this, the world's oldest known seafaring boat, is on display.  
[dovermuseum.co.uk](http://dovermuseum.co.uk)

### 2 Stonehenge, Wiltshire

Where a megalithic stone circle stands  
Built in c2500 BC, Stonehenge was an important site of early pilgrimage until the early Bronze Age, when one of the greatest concentrations of round barrows in Britain was built in the surrounding area. The henge monument at Avebury, a 26-mile walk away, was built and altered between 2850–2200 BC but, like Stonehenge, the reason for its existence is still debated.  
[english-heritage.org.uk](http://english-heritage.org.uk)

### 3 Skara Brae, Orkney

Where ancient houses are preserved  
Discovered by chance after a storm in 1850, the remains of the late Neolithic settlement at Skara Brae offer an insight into life between c3200 BC and c2200 BC, when the village was inhabited. Orkney itself boasts some 600 Bronze Age burial mounds, including a complex around the Ring of Brodgar, not far from Skara Brae.  
[orkney.com](http://orkney.com)

### 4 Lynn Museum, Norfolk

Where Bronze Age timbers are on show  
The remains of the Bronze Age timber circle discovered on Holme beach on the north Norfolk coast in 1998 are on show in Lynn Museum, along with a life-size replica. The wooden structure comprised 55 oak posts. In its centre was a huge upturned tree stump, which may have been used as part of a burial ritual.  
[museumsnorfolk.org.uk/lynn-museum](http://museumsnorfolk.org.uk/lynn-museum)

### 5 Great Orme Mines, Gwynedd

Where copper was once mined  
Mined for copper ores from nearly 4,000 years ago, some four miles of tunnels have been uncovered at Great Orme. Visitors can explore its huge caverns and prehistoric landscape, as well as view Bronze Age mining tools and artefacts.  
[greatormemines.info](http://greatormemines.info)





# Christmas Gift Guide

It's fast approaching Christmas, the perfect time to treat friends and loved ones. Here you will find a selection of Christmas gift options to show someone you care

# GIVING AT CHRISTMAS

It's the time of year for giving and receiving. Please find below a selection of charities that would welcome any donations to their cause.

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01255 473832

[www.classic-wings.co.uk](http://www.classic-wings.co.uk)

## 3 THE BRITISH BEE KEEPERS



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0845 680 7038

[www.adoptabeehive.co.uk](http://www.adoptabeehive.co.uk)

## THE NOT FORGOTTEN ASSOCIATION

**For the wounded every day is Remembrance Day**

We are one of the UK's oldest service charities and support the serving wounded, injured or sick as well as ex-service personnel with disabilities. Each year our unique programme of leisure and entertainment provides comfort, cheer and comradeship to some 10,000 men and women of all ages. Please help us to ensure that they are not forgotten.

☎ 0207 730 2400

[www.nfassociation.org](http://www.nfassociation.org)

Registered charity no. 1150541



## THE POPPY FACTORY

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For many men and women leaving the Armed Forces, physical or mental health conditions sustained during or after duty can prove to be a real barrier to civilian employment and to maintaining a normal life.

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# TEN THINGS TO DO AT CHRISTMAS

## 1 EXHIBITION / FREE ENTRY

### Christmas Past: 400 Years of Seasonal Traditions in English Homes

**Geffrye Museum, London**  
25 November–4 January  
☎ 020 7739 9893  
● [geffrye-museum.org.uk](http://geffrye-museum.org.uk)

Walk through 11 period living rooms and discover how Christmas has been celebrated in English middle-class homes over the past four centuries.

## 2 EXHIBITION

### Christmas 2014 – A Winter's Tale

**American Museum in Britain, Bath**  
22 November–14 December  
☎ 01225 460 503  
● [americanmuseum.org](http://americanmuseum.org)

This Christmas, the museum's period rooms will be themed around recreated scenes from popular fiction set in America, including Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and Washington Irving's *Legend of Sleepy Hollow*.

## 3 LECTURE

### Anglo-Saxon Christmas

**Ashmolean Museum, Oxford**  
11 December  
☎ 01865 278000  
● [ashmolean.org](http://ashmolean.org)

Professor MJ Toswell of the University of Western Ontario discusses the food, liturgy and celebration of Christmas in Anglo-Saxon England.

## 4 LECTURE / FREE ENTRY

### Christmas in the Trenches

**Lancaster City Museum Meeting Room**  
8 December  
☎ 01524 64637 (booking line)  
● [kingsownmuseum.plus.com](http://kingsownmuseum.plus.com)

A look at how soldiers of the King's Own Regiment celebrated Christmas during the Great War.

## 5 EVENT

### Christmas at Home with the Edwardians

**Locksmith's House, Willenhall**  
5–6 December  
☎ 0121 557 9643  
● [bclm.co.uk](http://bclm.co.uk)

Experience an Edwardian-style Christmas with traditional activities and entertainment, including carol singing and storytelling.

## 6 LECTURE

### Christmas in the Trenches and at Home

**York Castle Museum**  
15 December  
☎ 01904 650333  
● [yorkcastlemuseum.org.uk](http://yorkcastlemuseum.org.uk)

Senior curator Alison Bodley will use objects from the museum's collections to illustrate how York's men and women experienced Christmas in 1914 – at home and on the front line.

## 7 EVENT

### Christmas Dickensian Walks

**Charles Dickens Museum, London**  
Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays throughout December (not Boxing Day)  
☎ 020 7405 2127  
● [dickensmuseum.com](http://dickensmuseum.com)

Explore the life of Charles Dickens and his festive tale *A Christmas Carol* with a walk through the streets that inspired him, and readings en route.

## 8 LECTURE

### Glad Tidings: History of the Christmas Card

**British Postal Museum and Archive, London**  
2 December  
☎ 020 7239 2570 (booking line)  
● [postalheritage.org.uk](http://postalheritage.org.uk)

Find out how the imagery of the traditional Christmas card can reveal the changes in the way people have celebrated the season through history.

## 9 EVENT

### A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

**King's College Chapel, Cambridge**  
24 December  
☎ 01223 331100  
● [kings.cam.ac.uk](http://kings.cam.ac.uk)

The festive carol service, which has been held annually at King's College Chapel since 1918, returns for another year. You can also listen to the event on BBC Radio 4 at 3pm.

## 10 EVENT

### Tudor Christmas

**Hampton Court Palace, Surrey**  
27 December–1 January  
☎ 0844 482 7777  
● [hrp.org.uk/HamptonCourtPalace](http://hrp.org.uk/HamptonCourtPalace)

Discover how Henry VIII and his Tudor court celebrated Christmas at Hampton Court Palace in 1546.



Explore the imagery of Christmas cards, like this example from c1870, at the British Postal Museum and Archive



## MY FAVOURITE PLACE

# Cartagena de Indias, Colombia



by **Miranda Kaufmann**

In the latest instalment of our historical holidays series, Miranda describes the colour and culture of a former Spanish colonial city

I've only visited Cartagena de Indias once, but it cast an enduring spell on me. I arrived in the old walled city after dark. Wandering past colourful Spanish colonial houses, their balconies overflowing with bright pink bougainvillea, I was seduced by the music echoing through the cobbled streets. Like the city itself, the music was a fusion of cultures: the dancers below the statue of Simón Bolívar (Venezuelan leader, and president of Gran Colombia from 1819–30) moved to the sounds of African drumbeats and South American pipes.

Standing beneath the statue of India Catalina – outside the city wall – it's hard not to be reminded that indigenous peoples inhabited this area for some 5,000 years before the Spanish arrived. Catalina was the daughter of a Kalamari chieftain, and was captured in 1509. She was baptised and learnt Spanish, later acting as a translator for Pedro de Heredia when he founded the city in 1533. The help she gave this conquistador, who plundered the wealth of her people, still divides opinion as to whether she should be remembered as a heroine or a traitor.

Cartagena became one of the richest trading ports in Spanish America – gold and silver mined from across the continent was loaded into galleons here en route to Spain. It was also one of two ports authorised by the Spanish crown to trade in enslaved Africans. At the peak of the trade, at least 1,000 slaves were sold in the triangular Plaza de las Coches – now a popular tourist hub, lined with sweet stalls – every month.

Saint Pedro Claver (1581–1654), the self-proclaimed 'perpetual slave of the Ethiopians', who ministered to newly arrived captives with his team of multilingual African interpreters, is still widely celebrated in the city. Just a short walk from the Plaza de las Coches is a statue (below) of him helping an

enslaved Angolan – it stands outside the eponymous church where his remains can be found in a glass case set within its high altar. Head to the church museum for artwork and information about the saint.

Canonised in 1888, Claver worked in Cartagena for more than 30 years after his ordination in 1622, baptising more than 300,000 slaves.

From 1610 Cartagena was one of three Inquisition tribunals in the Americas. The Palacio de Inquisition, which was finished in 1770, has an instructive, if gruesome, display of the torture equipment deployed to weed out heretics and witches. Don't miss the small window with a cross on top, just around the corner from the entrance. This was where people were denounced as heretics by their enemies.

Cartagena's riches made it a prime target for pirates. In 1586, Sir Francis Drake sacked the city and extracted a ransom of 110,000 ducats, having seriously delayed the completion of the cathedral with his cannonballs. The building was finally finished in 1612 and is well worth a visit.

In 1697, French commander Bernard Desjean's attack on Cartagena left him rich enough to impress even Louis XIV. But

English naval officer Edward Vernon was not so lucky. In 1741 his large-scale assault on the city ended in failure when Admiral Blas de Lezo successfully drove away the English fleet. Known as the 'Half-Man', De Lezo only had one arm, one leg and one eye. He lost his other leg in this action, dying shortly afterwards.

Blas de Lezo's statue stands before the Castillo San Felipe de Barajas, the most impressive part of the city's fortifications, which have gained Unesco World Heritage Site status. Gazing at this fortress, one can see just how much it took to keep pirates at bay.



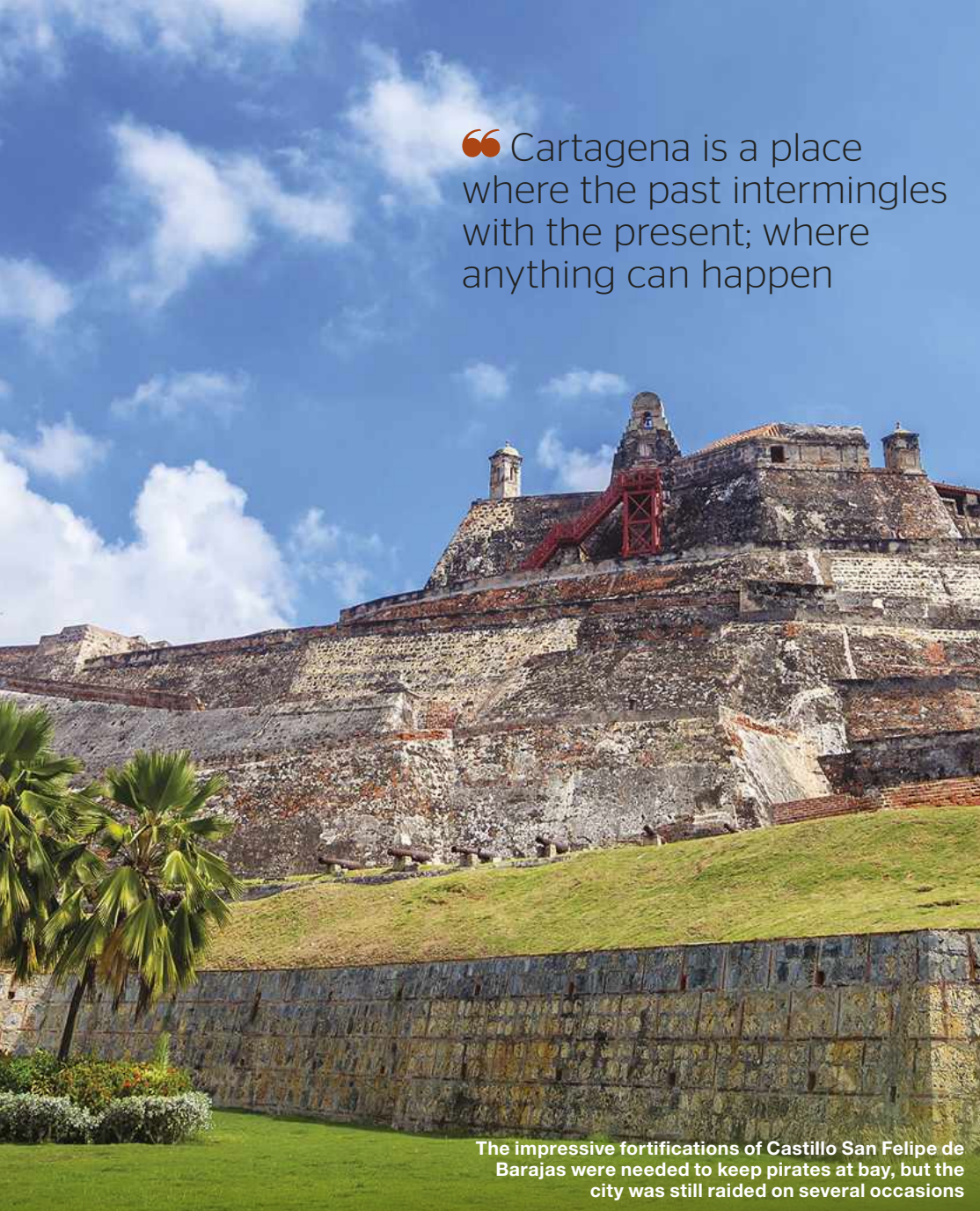
A statue of the "widely celebrated" Pedro Claver with an Angolan slave



BRIDGEMAN/JENI NOTT



“Cartagena is a place where the past intermingles with the present; where anything can happen



The impressive fortifications of Castillo San Felipe de Barajas were needed to keep pirates at bay, but the city was still raided on several occasions

Cartagena declared independence from Spain on 11 November 1811 and after a decade of warfare, the city's freedom was secured. Simón Bolívar wrote his *Cartagena Manifesto* here in 1812, and went on to launch his invasion of Venezuela with the city's backing the following year. As recorded in an inscription below his equestrian statue in the leafy Plaza de Bolívar, he

later remarked: "If Caracas gave me life, Cartagena gave me glory."

Over the last century, the magic of Cartagena has inspired resident artists such as Alejandro Obregon, and writers such as Gabriel Garcia Marquez, who called Cartagena a place of "amethyst afternoons and nights of antic breezes". As you inhale the city's air, scenes from his novels will waft around you.

What I love most about Cartagena is that it is a place where the past intermingles with the present; where anything can happen. It's a place that inspires chance encounters. I met a local

historian in the street who took me on a tour of the city, which ended in a cigar-rolling factory with a glass of whisky!

The framed sketch of a galleon docking in Cartagena, bought in the street for a few pesos and now hanging on my wall, entreats me to return one day. **H**

**Dr Miranda Kaufmann** is a historian and journalist: [mirandakaufmann.com](http://mirandakaufmann.com)

**Read more about Miranda's experiences in Cartagena at [historyextra.com/cartagena](http://historyextra.com/cartagena)**

**Next month:** Miles Russell visits Sicily in Italy

## ADVICE FOR TRAVELLERS

### BEST TIME TO GO

Cartagena is a typically Caribbean average of 28°C year-round, but is drier between December and April. Head there on the last weekend of January to catch the Hay Festival ([hayfestival.com/cartagena/en-index.aspx](http://hayfestival.com/cartagena/en-index.aspx)), in mid-March for the International Film Festival ([ficcifestival.com/?idi=en](http://ficcifestival.com/?idi=en)), or 11 November for Independence Day celebrations.

### GETTING THERE

Flights to Rafael Núñez International Airport, Cartagena de Indias go from London via Bogotá. It's a short ride by taxi from the airport to the city centre. If you have time, make Cartagena part of a longer exploration of South America, but remember it's safer to arrive there by air than by road.

### WHAT TO PACK

Comfy shoes for walking and dancing. And a copy of *Love in the Time of Cholera* or *Love and other Demons* by Gabriel Garcia Marquez.

### WHAT TO BRING BACK

Cigars. Colombian coffee.

### READERS' VIEWS

**Visit the Museum of the Inquisition. Horrifying instruments of torture in a charming little house.**

@cjr1968

**Be sure to see the walled city, San Felipe's Fort, Rosario's Islands**

@carlosmendezcal



### Been there...

Have you been to **Cartagena de Indias**? Do you have a top tip for readers? Contact us via Twitter or Facebook

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# 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

To wrap up 2014 here are a selection of history experiences for the upcoming year.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>1</b> Railway<br><b>VALE OF RHEIDOL RAILWAY</b> Ceredigion                  | <b>2</b> Genealogy Library<br><b>THE PRIAULX LIBRARY</b> Guernsey           |
| <b>3</b> Heritage Travel<br><b>BROOKLAND TRAVEL</b> Throughout the UK          | <b>4</b> Museum<br><b>PETRIE MUSEUM</b> London                              |
| <b>5</b> Early evening private tours<br><b>HOUSEHOLD CAVALRY MUSEUM</b> London | <b>6</b> Cathedrals<br><b>DURHAM CATHEDRAL</b> Durham                       |
| <b>7</b> Book to read<br><b>ANDRE DEUTSCH</b> Available throughout the uk      | <b>8</b> Short Course<br><b>UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE</b> Cambridge           |
| <b>9</b> Balloon Flight<br><b>VIRGIN BALLOON FLIGHTS</b> Throughout the UK     | <b>10</b> Visit a library<br><b>INSTITUTE OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH</b> London |
| <b>11</b> Castle<br><b>BAMBURGH CASTLE</b> Northumberland                      | <b>12</b> Historic House<br><b>BURGHLEY HOUSE</b> Lincolnshire              |

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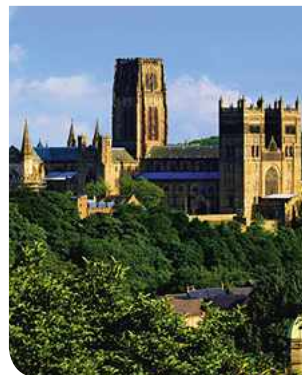
### 5. HOUSEHOLD CAVALRY MUSEUM



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### 6. DURHAM CATHEDRAL



Celebrate the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta by visiting Durham Cathedral, one of Britain's best-loved buildings. This magnificent Romanesque Cathedral holds three copies of Magna Carta, one of which will be displayed at Durham University's Palace Green Library on the Durham UNESCO World Heritage Site in summer 2015.

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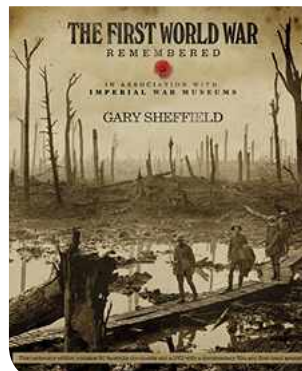


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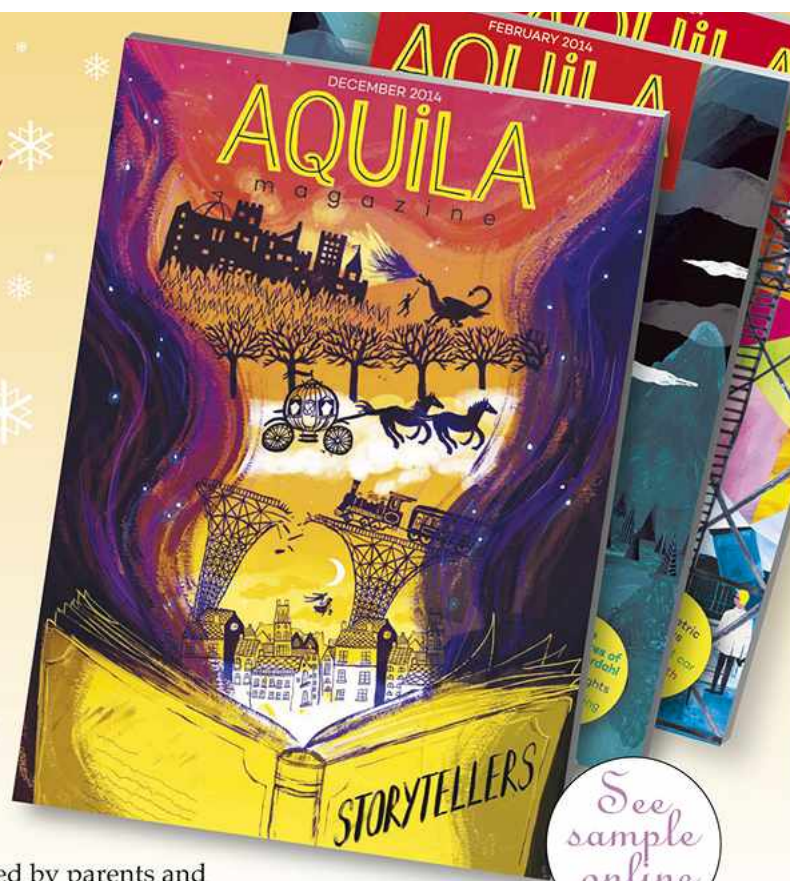


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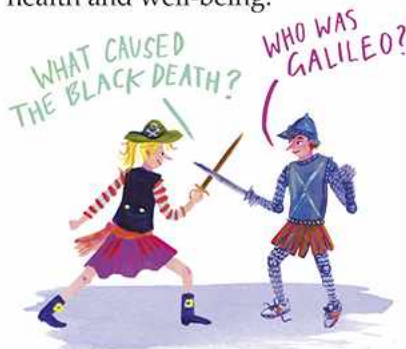
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### KEY FEATURES

- Led by historian Dr Sophie Ambler of the Magna Carta Project
- Reception and lecture with Dr David Starkey
- View rare original copies of the 1215 Magna Carta on the 800th anniversary of this iconic document
- Visits to Windsor, Lincoln, Chepstow and Canterbury

## Itinerary

### Day One

Meet in our London hotel for drinks, dinner and an evening lecture by Dr Sophie Ambler. Overnight London.

### Day Two | London

At the British Library we view two 1215 Magna Cartas (just four survive), then the 13th-century Temple Church, burial place of William Marshal, guarantor of Magna Carta. We visit Westminster Abbey (rebuilt by King John's son, Henry III) and Westminster's 11th-century great hall, site of Magna Carta's confirmation in 1253 and 1265. Overnight Windsor.

### Day Three | Windsor and Runnymede

We explore Windsor, home of England's largest royal castle, and King John's base during Magna Carta negotiations. We go to Runnymede where Magna Carta was sealed. Reception and lecture with Dr David Starkey. Overnight Windsor.

### Day Four | Chepstow and Gloucester

Visit Chepstow Castle, the power base of William Marshal, and Gloucester Cathedral, site of Henry III's coronation in 1216. Drive to Worcester to visit King John's tomb. Overnight Worcester.

### Day Five | Leicestershire and Lincoln

Travel to the ruined castle of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, the residence of one of King John's men. We head to Lincoln (site of Marshal's last stand in 1217) and explore the gothic cathedral and Norman castle, and see another of the original Magna Cartas. Overnight Lincoln.

### Day Six | Canterbury and Dover

After visiting Denny Abbey in Cambridgeshire, home to the Knights Templar, we travel to Canterbury, with its majestic cathedral, site of Thomas Becket's martyrdom. It was the seat of Archbishop Stephen Langton who negotiated Magna Carta. We visit Dover Castle, jewel in the Plantagenet crown, defended from French attack in 1216 by King John's chief justice, Hubert de Burgh. Return to London where our tour ends.

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## Q Who was 'Sober Sue'?

**A** In 1907, an unlikely performer appeared at the Victoria Theatre in New York. Billed as Sober Sue, she was an elderly woman who simply sat on stage and defied members of the audience to make her laugh. Many people, including professional comedians, were tempted by a monetary reward if successful, but Sober Sue was never seen to crack the smallest of smiles.

It was later suggested that her ability to maintain a straight face was the result of muscular paralysis that meant it was physically impossible for her to smile. Briefly, she was a celebrity in the city and her name continued to be used in American showbusiness for decades. As late as the 1940s, reviewers wrote of acts being "funny enough to make Sober Sue smile".

Nick Rennison

## Q What was the Great Emu War?

**A** Farmers in Western Australia were already facing difficulties with their crops in the summer of 1932 when an invasion by 20,000 migrating emus added to them. The army was called in to cull the birds and a small group of machine gunners, under the command of Major GPW Meredith, was sent into the outback.

Killing the emus proved more difficult than anticipated and two separate campaigns ended in failure. Major Meredith was impressed by his feathered foe and was reported to have said "they can face machine guns with the invulnerability of tanks".

Confronted by the mockery of the press, who dubbed the cull 'The Great Emu War', and by the outrage of conservationists, the government was soon forced to find other methods of dealing with the problem, including placing a bounty on the birds.

Nick Rennison

In the 1930s, invading emus had bounties placed on their heads



ILLUSTRATION BY GLEN MCBETH

## Q How many children did Genghis Khan really have?

Henry Hinder, by email

**A** Temüjin (1162?–1227), who became the Great Khan of the Mongol empire by uniting the squabbling tribes of north-east Asia and conquering much of central Asia and China, was reputed to have had a huge sexual appetite.

His wife Börte was only the most important of a number of consorts. While only her descendants formed the bloodline of the Mongol empire's later rulers, he had numerous children by other wives. The precise number is unknown, but many of his children went on to positions of great military, political and commercial power.

Aside from his legitimate children, Temüjin sired several illegitimate ones with other – often, it seems, unwilling – partners. The Mongol conquests were accompanied by murder and rape on a truly apocalyptic scale.

Defeated peoples were massacred and enslaved, and we are told that Temüjin had his pick of the most beautiful women.

The Great Khan's reputation for fertility was further bolstered by a genetic study published in 2003, which suggested that around 8 per cent of men in the region of Asia roughly contiguous with his empire shared the same male ancestor.

Naturally it was suggested that this must be Temüjin. But the findings remain highly contentious: the Y-chromosome the modern Asians have in common could have come from any of his male forebears, brothers or half-brothers, or possibly someone not directly related at all.

Eugene Byrne, author and journalist



## Q&amp;A

## Q What happened to the Nordic settlers of Greenland who disappeared in the 14th century?

**Frimann Stefansson**, Akureyri, Iceland

**A** The disappearance of the Norse population in Greenland most likely had no single cause. The two main areas of Norse settlement – the so-called Eastern and Western Settlements – were both operating by c1000 AD and were inhabited into at least the 14th century.

The Western Settlement was further north and so closer to other possible rival groups, such as members of the Dorset culture and, later, Thule Inuit. Icelandic sagas and Inuit folktales both record conflict between the two groups.

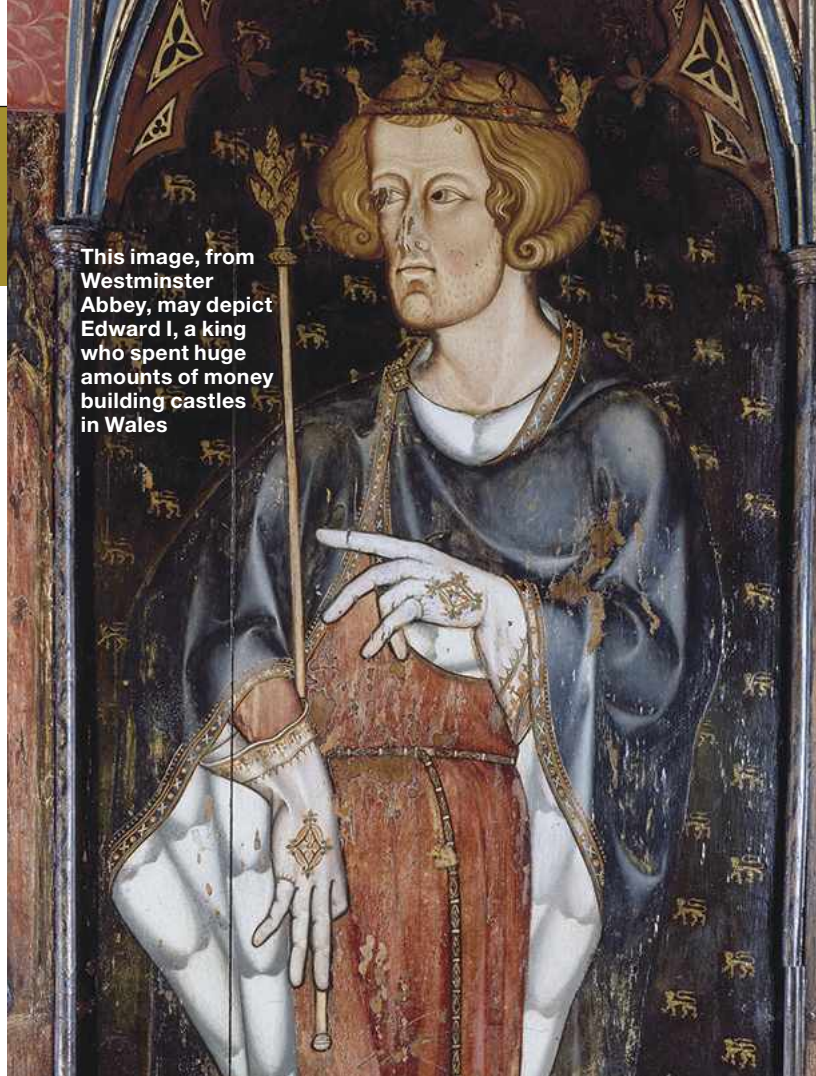
Climatic and economic factors no doubt also caused the Norse to leave or die out. Data suggests that average temperatures dropped and the weather became less predictable, making pastoral farming less productive. Soil erosion was caused by grazing livestock, while contact with Norway – and thus European trade – seems to have lessened during the period.

Most likely a decreasing population was reduced to nothing as some decided to leave, while famine and disease periodically claimed the lives of others.

**Dr Chris Callow**, lecturer in medieval history at the University of Birmingham



**A 20th-century tapestry depicts a boat of Norsemen in c1000 AD**



**This image, from Westminster Abbey, may depict Edward I, a king who spent huge amounts of money building castles in Wales**

## Q Why did Edward I spend vast sums building castles in such a sparsely populated country as Wales? Was he concerned about external rather than internal threats?

**Graham Collins**, by email

**A** Edward I was certainly not concerned with external threats, because there weren't any. At the time he invaded Wales (first in 1277, then again in 1282), Ireland, which was in any case largely colonised by the English, was at peace, while relations with Scotland and France had been amicable for many decades.

Edward's castles were indeed very expensive and involved vast labour forces to construct. Altogether they cost something like £100,000, at a time when the king's ordinary annual income was only about a quarter of that figure. And, yes, Wales was sparsely populated compared with England. But, at the same time, conflict with the princes of Wales had been a constant throughout Edward's life, with campaigns in the 1240s,

1250s and 1260s. His father, Henry III, had built castles in north Wales that were destroyed after only 15 years.

War was expensive – Edward's campaigns in Wales cost considerably more than his castles. But his castles – state-of-the-art fortresses built on an awesome scale – meant that his conquest was decisive. After 1295, there was no significant rebellion in Wales for over a century. Seen from that perspective, Edward's castles were a sound investment.


**Marc Morris** is a historian and author. His forthcoming book, *King John: Treachery, Tyranny and the Road to Magna Carta*, will be published in 2015 by Random House

**For more on medieval castle-building, turn to page 32**





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# CHRISTMAS QUIZ

BY JULIAN HUMPHRYS

## TRADITIONS

With which Christmas traditions would you associate...

1. Tom Smith?
2. Henry Cole?
3. The people of Oslo?
4. St Francis of Assisi?
5. The town of Demre, Turkey?



## IN THE NEWS THIS YEAR

6. The first element of which floral memorial was planted on 17 July?
7. What did Professor Michael Hicks call into question in April?
8. In May, which town was confirmed as the oldest continuously inhabited settlement in Britain?
9. Which major London museum reopened in July after a £40m redesign?
10. The discovery of two long-lost cities in 2014 helped to enhance our understanding of which ancient civilisation?

## WATERLOO

18 June 2015 marks the 200th anniversary of the battle

21. Who commanded the Prussian army during the Waterloo campaign?
22. What was distinctive about the Brunswick Corps in Wellington's army?
23. Which of these British regiments was the odd one out at Waterloo – 23rd, 42nd, 79th or 92nd?
24. Which French marshal became the scapegoat for Napoleon's defeat?
25. Don Miguel de Álava was the Spanish representative on Wellington's staff at Waterloo. What was unusual about his military service?



28



## A MIXED BAG

26. 15 June marks the 800th anniversary of the sealing of Magna Carta. Which two cathedrals still hold original copies?
27. 25 October marks the 600th anniversary of the battle of Agincourt. Why did Sir Thomas Erpingham throw his baton in the air at the start of the action?
28. 26 April marks the 250th anniversary of the birth of Emma Hamilton, best known as the lover of Lord Nelson. She died 200 years ago on 15 January – where?
29. 9 June marks the 150th anniversary of the Staplehurst rail crash. Which famous writer was one of the survivors?
30. 4 June marks the 75th anniversary of which famous speech?



## 50 YEARS AGO, IN 1965...

11. Which leaf came to international prominence in February?
12. Which king met the Beatles in August?
13. Which London landmark was officially opened in October?
14. Who did Roy Jenkins replace as home secretary in December?
15. Which human rights activist was murdered in Manhattan in February?
16. Which highway was revisited in August, and by whom?
17. How did Goldie hit the headlines in February?
18. Which country declared unilateral independence in November?
19. Which local government body of England came into being in April?
20. Who was buried at the church pictured below on 30 January?



20

## 100 YEARS AGO, IN 1915...

31. Which controversial film premiered in Los Angeles in February?
32. Which famous poem was penned near Ypres in May?
33. Which Canadian-formed organisation held its first UK meeting at Llanfair PG, Wales on 16 September?
34. What did German submarine U-20 do on 7 May?
35. In November, Audrey Munson became the first actress to do what?
36. What occupied Palestine from March to October?
37. What occurred at Quintinshill, near Gretna Green, on 22 May?
38. What happened near Gravenstafel, Ypres on 22 April?
39. What event of 12 October does this statue, on London's St Martin's Place, commemorate?
40. What did Sir Cecil Chubb buy at auction on 21 September?

39





## ANNIVERSARY IMAGES

41. (800th) How did Gérard d'Athée's name go down in history here?



42. (750th) Who is this and where did he die?

43. (600th) What happened here in early August 1415?



44. (500th) In July 1515, Hugh Oldham (below), Bishop of Exeter, founded a school. Which one?



45. (450th) Who is this and who did he marry in July 1565?



46. (400th) On 25 September 1615 this possible successor to Queen Elizabeth I died in the Tower of London. Who was she?



47. (300th) What happened on this site on 6 September 1715?



49. (200th) The invention of this lamp was announced in November 1815. Who invented it and what is it?

48. (250th) HMS *Victory* was launched in May 1765. Where?



50. (150th) Who met here on 9 April 1865?



## SOLUTION TO OUR NOVEMBER CROSSWORD

**Across:** 1 Henry VI 5 Batista 10 Shamir 11 Rochdale 12 Jousting 13 Euclid 14 Dieppe 16 Tigris 19 Cronje 21 Trajan 23 Treaty 25 Bancroft 27 Whistler 28 Elijah 29 Gresham 30 Gin Act.  
**Down:** 2 Ethiopia 3 Remus 4 Vortigern 6 Ancr 7 Indochina 8 Tallis 9 Wright 15 Parnassus 17 Gutenberg 18 Lanfranc 20 Egbert 22 Arthur 24 Yalta 26 Reign.

## FIVE WINNERS OF INCONVENIENT PEOPLE BY SARAH WISE:

A Moir, West Midlands; S Gill, Cornwall; L Toole, Cumbria; N Jones, Somerset; D Whitehead, Dorset

36. A plague of locusts. 37. Britain's worst Confederate Army. 38. The execution of a man. 39. Execution of nurse Edith Cavell by German firing squad. 40. Stonehenge. 41. *Magna Carta* (sealed at Runnymede) banned his knismen from holding office. 42. Simon de Montfort; he died at Evesham on 4 August 1265. 43. The executions of Cambridge, Henry, Lord Scrope and Sir Thomas Grey, for plotting against King Henry V. 44. Manchester Grammar School. 45. Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, married Mary, Queen of Scots. 46. Arbella Stuart. 47. The Earl of Mar raised the standard of the Old Pretender (it's the Invercauld Arms, Braemar). 48. Chatham. 49. Sir Humphry Davy's miner's safety lamp. 50. General's Ulisses S Grant and Robert E Lee met at McLean House, Appomattox, Virginia, where the latter signed the surrender of the Confederate Army.

12. Elvis Presley. 13. The Post Office (now BT) Tower. 14. Frank Sossike. 15. Malcolm X. 16. Highway 61, in the album by Bob Dylan. 17. He escaped from London Zoo (he was an eagle). 18. Rhodesia. 19. Greater London Council. 20. Sir Winston Churchill (at St Martin's Church, Bladon, Oxfordshire). 21. Field Marshal Gebhard von Blücher. 22. They were dressed in black regiments, while the 23rd was the Highland de Crouchy. 25. He had fought against the British at the battle of Trafalgar. 27. To signal to his archers to start shooting. 28. Calais. 29. Charles Dickens. 30. Winston Churchill's "We shall fight on the beaches..." 31. *The Birth of a Nation*. 32. *In Flanders Fields* by John McCrae. 33. The Women's Institute. 34. It sank the RMS *Lusitania*. 35. Appear nude in a film.

**TRADITIONS:** 1. Christmas crackers. He manufactured the first ones in the 1840s. 2. Christmas cards. He commissioned the first printed cards in 1843. 3. The Christmas tree in Trafalgar Square, given each year since 1947 in gratitude for Britain's support in the Second World War. 4. Carols. The saint composed songs with a Christmas theme in the 13th century. 5. Santa Claus. Denville (formerly Myra) was the home of St Nicholas. **IN THE NEWS 2014:** 6. Ceramic poppies. Some 900,000 were planted in the moat of the Tower of London to commemorate the centenary of the First World War. 7. That the skeleton discovered in a Leicester car park was that of Richard III. 8. Amesbury, Wiltshire. 9. Santa Claus. Denville (formerly Myra) was the home of St Nicholas. 10. Maya (Lagunita and Tamchen) Museum. 11. The maple leaf – it adorned the new flag adopted by Canada. **50 YEARS AGO:** 11. The maple leaf – it

## QUIZ ANSWERS





## PRIZE CROSSWORD



This man was  
executed by  
James VI and I.  
But who is it?  
(See 18 across)

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the year

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## Across

- 1 Starting place, at a baker's shop, of the Great Fire of London, 1666 (7,4)  
 7 The prince who did much to introduce 'traditional' Christmas-tide practices in Victorian Britain (6)  
 11 This old English unit of length was divided into 100 links (5)  
 12 Term used by a campaigning group founded in 1971 calling for traditional brewing methods (4,3)  
 13 See 35 down  
 14 Sir Peter, painter of Charles I and Cromwell, 'warts and all' (4)  
 15 Francisco ('Pancho'), a great Mexican revolutionary leader of the early 20th century (5)  
 16 To decorate, eg a shield with heraldic figures (8)  
 18 Favourite of Elizabeth I executed by James VI and I (one spelling) (6)  
 20 He was crowned emperor by Pope Leo III on Christmas Day 800 (11)  
 22 Sicilian port founded by the Greeks, who named it Zankle (scythe) because of the shape of its harbour (7)  
 24 Large area of North America bought by US from France in 1803 (9)  
 26 He was a key figure in the Vietnamese struggle for independence from the French (2,3,4)  
 28 (English) title of a book of Latin and Greek proverbs by Desiderius Erasmus, published in the early 16th century (6)  
 31/3 down Begun on New Year's Day 1660, this record provides an invaluable insight into Restoration England (6,5,5)  
 33 Bedlam became the first such hospital in Britain in the 14th century (6)  
 34 All that remains of the priory at this Cumbrian village is the church and gatehouse, saved after Dissolution (7)  
 36 Timothy, given a posthumous pardon in 1966, having been wrongly hanged for murders committed by John Christie (5)  
 37 The name applied to the alliance of forces fighting against the Allies in the Second World War (4)  
 38 York, according to the Romans (abbrev.) (4)  
 39 Repealed in 1733, it legislated against any unruly assembly of 12 or more (4,3)  
 40 English robber, hanged near York in 1739, whose life has been much romanticised (6)  
 41 British prime minister between 1945 and 51 (6)  
 42 Series of conflicts triggered by the Ionian Revolt against Darius I, begun in 499 BC (7,4)

## Down

- 2 Figure traditionally personifying the US, similar to Britain's John Bull (5,3)  
 3 See 31 across  
 4 Ancient Assyrian capital sacked by the Babylonians and Medes etc in 612 BC (7)  
 5 Peer whose disappearance in 1974, after the murder of his children's nanny, gave rise to much speculation (4,5)  
 6 River and system of falls that attracted many wire walkers in the 19th century (7)  
 7 A controversial British policy of the Second World War, overseen by Sir Arthur Harris, intended to destroy German civilian morale (4,7)  
 8 Former name of the country in which Aung San Suu Kyi became a leading campaigner for democracy (5)  
 9 An old English measure, also known as perch or pole (3)  
 10 The battle here in 1815 effectively ended France's domination of Europe (8)  
 17 British cinema chain developed by J Arthur Rank from 1940s onwards (5)  
 19 Worcestershire town, venue of last major battle (1265) in the Barons' War (7)  
 21 Port on the Humber said to have been founded in the ninth century AD by a Danish fisherman (7)  
 23 Joint inventor of a coded system for the telegraphic transmission of characters in the 1830s (6,5)  
 25 The battle of \_\_\_, first major action of the British Army in the First World War (4)  
 27 Name of three French emperors from the same family, the third of whom was to be France's last monarch (8)  
 29 René, French 17th-century philosopher, popularly known for his assertion: "I think, therefore I am" (9)  
 30 A type of regimental soldier, whose name derives from the name for a flintlock musket (8)  
 32 A definitive UK guide to the genealogy and heraldry of which was founded by John Burke in 1826 (7)  
 33 Old name for Alsace; also an area of Whitefriars, London which was a debtors' sanctuary (7)  
 34 An ancient unit of measurement based on the length from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger (5)  
 35/13 across Just one of Cobbett's 19th-century journeys of discovery around Britain's countryside (5,4)  
 37 The name 'Fletcher' meant a maker of such a weapon (5)

Compiled by **Eddie James**

## CROSSWORD COMPETITION TERMS &amp; CONDITIONS

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# NEXT MONTH

JANUARY ISSUE ON SALE 2 JANUARY 2015

## The end of the war

Antony Beevor, Maggie Andrews and Laurence Rees explore the tragic and joyous closing months of the fight against Hitler

## 1945 SPECIAL ISSUE



## Sex and Charles II >

Don Jordan and Michael Walsh ask if the Stuart king was too randy to rule effectively

## Medieval dandies?

Thomas Asbridge explores the early lives of Henry the Young King and William Marshal



## < Thomas Cromwell

Hilary Mantel and Diarmaid MacCulloch discuss the notorious Tudor power broker and *Wolf Hall*







"This 'cottage-bred man' from rural Gwynedd showed the English establishment how to get things done, how to make things happen, how to win a war and how to change society for the better"

*BBC news presenter Huw Edwards chooses*

# David Lloyd George

1863-1945

**D**avid Lloyd George was prime minister from 1916 to 1922, and was hailed as "the man who won the war". Born in humble circumstances, he grew up in north Wales. After qualifying as a solicitor, in 1890 he was elected Liberal MP for Carnarvon (now Caernarfon), a seat he would hold in every election until his elevation to the Lords in 1945. He served as president of the board of trade (1905–08) and then chancellor of the exchequer (1908–15) in Liberal administrations, helping to introduce reforms such as old age pensions and National Insurance (1911), but his 1909 'People's Budget' was rejected by the House of Lords, sparking a constitutional crisis. In 1915, a year after the outbreak of the First World War, he became a highly effective minister of munitions. He succeeded Asquith as prime minister in 1916 and, after the German surrender, won a landslide victory in the 'Coupon Election' of 1918. He played a pivotal role in the Treaty of Versailles but was forced from office in 1922.

### When did you first hear about Lloyd George?

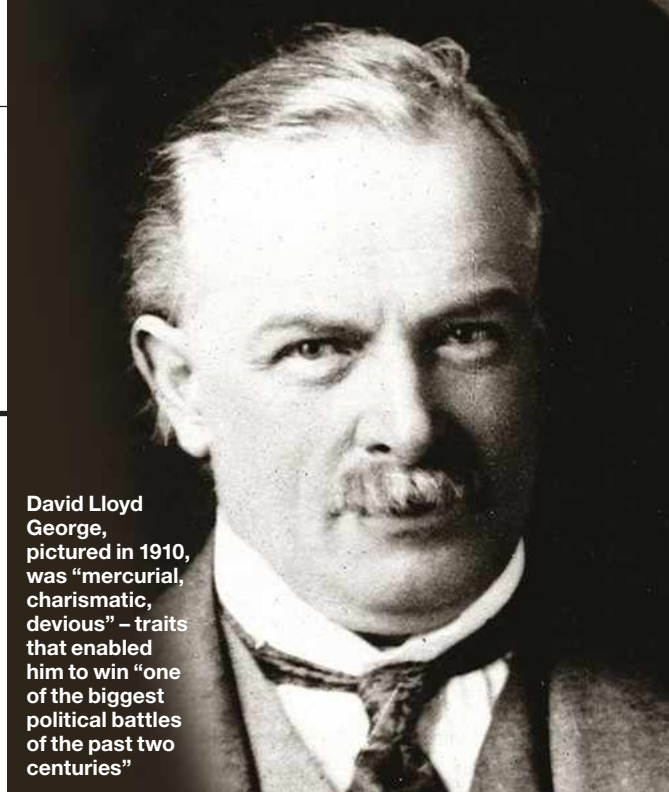
We followed a Welsh history course on the radio at my primary school in Llangennech. My teacher told us that David Lloyd George was the greatest social reformer – the man who introduced old age pensions. Though I now realise that that was mostly Asquith's work, Lloyd George *was* responsible for other major social and constitutional reforms. I've been fascinated by him ever since.

### What kind of person was he?

Complex. Mercurial. Charismatic. Devious. Brilliant. Energetic. Ambitious. Scheming. An outsider. A genius. An enigma. All of these descriptions are true. I am not blind to his faults (and there were quite a few) but they are wholly, entirely overshadowed by his outstanding achievements.

### What made him a hero?

I am full of admiration for the way this 'cottage-bred man' from rural Gwynedd – with none of the advantages of a formal education – outwitted and outclassed the elite of the English establishment. He showed them how to get things done, how to make things happen, how to win a war and how to change society



David Lloyd George, pictured in 1910, was "mercurial, charismatic, devious" – traits that enabled him to win "one of the biggest political battles of the past two centuries"

for the better. Lloyd George's achievements – as Gordon Brown once told me – will never be equalled.

### What was his finest hour?

He was rightly praised around the world as "the man who won the war" – and in this centenary year of the outbreak of the First World War it is right to put his remarkable record as a war leader at the top of the list. But I reckon his 'other' finest hour was facing down the unelected peers who shamelessly opposed his 'People's Budget' of 1909. He called their bluff and won. It was one of the biggest political battles of the past two centuries, and its effects are still with us today.

### Is there anything you don't particularly admire about him?

I regret the fact that he gave his critics (then and now) plenty of ammunition to fire at him. His colourful private life, his dodgy financial dealings, his crazy expression of respect for Hitler in 1936 – all these things are unappealing, but the quality of his leadership when Britain was deep in crisis cannot be denied.

### Can you see any parallels between his life and your own?

There are no meaningful parallels, given the scale of his achievements, but I suppose the 'outsider' tag is one I share. A Welsh person in London is always, to some extent, an outsider, even if he or she succeeds in life. Lloyd George had none of the advantages of private English schooling or an Oxbridge education and I greatly admire the way he overcame that huge disadvantage.

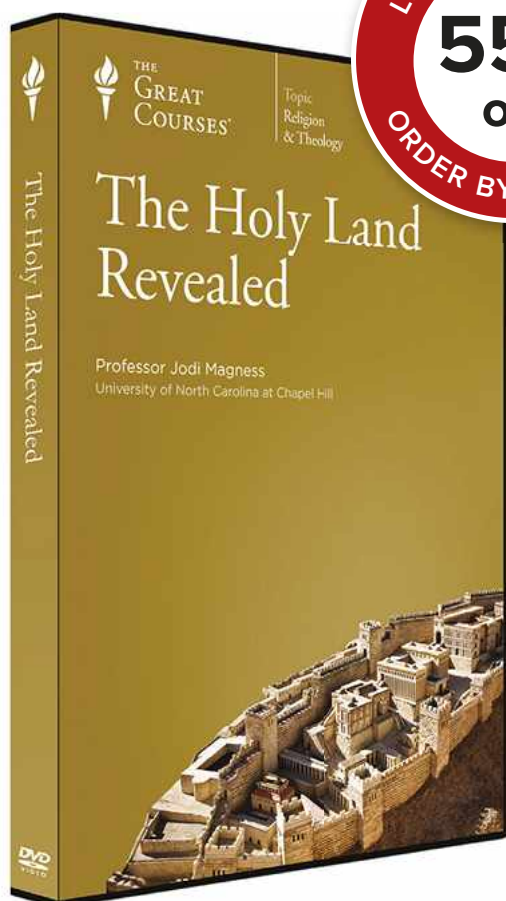
### If you could meet Lloyd George, what would you ask him?

I would ask if the devolution of power to Wales since 1997 had fulfilled his dream for Welsh home rule – Cymru Fydd – as set out more than a century ago. I suspect he would be bitterly disappointed. He wanted a strong, confident, self-governing Wales playing its full part within the United Kingdom. **LE**

*Huw Edwards was talking to York Members*

**Huw Edwards** is a Bafta award-winning broadcaster who has worked at the BBC for 30 years. He has presented BBC News at Ten since 2003. His latest book is *City Mission: The Story of London's Welsh Chapels* (Y Lolfa, 2014)





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24. Sites of the Trial and Final Hours of Jesus
25. Early Jewish Tombs in Jerusalem
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Shomei Tomatsu Steel Helmet with Skull Bone Fused by Atomic Bomb, Nagasaki 1963 (detail)  
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